

A Page in the Life of an Actor.—Story complete in this No.

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TREWAVAS COULD HAVE TRAMPED ON FOR EVER HOLDING THAT CHARMING BURDEN CLOSE TO HIS HEART.

## ONLY AN ACTOR.

By the Author of "MAYNIE," &c., &c.

[A NOVELETTE.]

COMPLETE IN THIS NUMBER.

### CHAPTER I.

**I**T was early in the month of May—beautiful bright, budding May. The London season was in full swing, the roads crowded with carriages, the streets with people, the shops with gaily-dressed folks buying finery to wear at the numerous balls, recep-

tions, and fetes that were being given by several members of the *beau monde*. The Row was crowded with pedestrians in the morning, with horses and carriages in the afternoon; the Academy was thronged daily; polo matches were being held at Hurlingham, cricket matches at Lord's, flower shows at the Botanical Gardens, concerts were taking place daily at the Albert Hall and St. James's Hall, while each and every one of the many theatres that now exist in this modern Babylon of London were filled nightly to overflowing.

There were many new successful pieces being played, and one or two new actors, but the one everybody was rushing to see was a young Cornishman, Robert Trewavas, who, in addition to being remarkably hand-

some, possessed great talent as an actor. His ability in portraying the sentimental passions was extraordinary. He was a most delightful stage lover, and most of the fair sex were raving about him, and numerous were the *billets doux*, bouquets and presents he received. Some sent anonymously, some with the full names and addresses of the fair and foolish donors. He had the *entrées* to some of the best houses in town, and it was said that he had received more than one proposal from ladies of high rank who were absolutely infatuated with him and his handsome presence.

He took all this adulation very coolly. He was not exactly the sort of man to be disturbed by it, or his peace destroyed by the anxious and heart-broken epistles that

Next Week Long Complete Story, by the Author of "PHILLIPA'S FATHER."

were penned to him by his frail admirers. It amused him a little, and bored him a great deal.

What did he care that one of them thought his fair looks leonine, another his grey eyes like stars, a third his figure equal to that of the sculptured Apollo's? He was susceptible, yet not tender. More than once he had fancied himself in love, and after paying considerable attention to the luckless object of his supposed passion, woke up to discover that it was all a mistake, and that he didn't care two pins for the girl. He was undoubtedly fickle: "to one thing constant never," and hardly ever knew his own mind for two days together. Then he was selfish. Perhaps that was his most prominent and disagreeable characteristic. Self with him was paramount; he was not exactly of a cruel disposition; he would not do anything unkind to another unless that other stood in his way, or was a cause of pain and annoyance to him; then woe betide that luckless fellow-creature. He or she would meet with scant mercy at the hands of the handsome young Cornishman, would be swept aside from his path with relentless indifference to all pain and suffering endured.

It was perhaps well that the admiring audiences that gathered nightly to see him play Hamlet, Macbeth, and other well-known characters, did not see what lay beneath the brilliant attractive surface, could not gauge the shallowness of that vain egotistical nature, whose one cry, whose one thought, was "I" "I" "I" the Alpha and Omega of his existence, his creed, his faith, his best and dearest possession.

"Are you very anxious, Maud?"

The speaker was Lady Dorothy Davenant, a well-known light in the world of frivolity and fashion, and the pretty girl she addressed was her niece-in-law, Miss Thornhill, Squire Thornhill's only child and heiress.

They were sitting in a box at the Paragon, on the dress circle tier, two old and three or four young men in attendance, and the girl's eyes were shining brightly, and her fair cheeks were flushed, and she showed every sign of strong and irresistible excitement.

"Very, very, aunt. I am dying to see him. Bella says he is adorable!"

"Fudge!" remarked the elder lady, with a little scornful smile. He's very clever as Hamlet, and I like his Orlando immensely, but I don't see that there is anything very adorable about him. He is like ten dozen other young fellows that I know as to looks."

"Kate told me he was perfectly handsome—splendid in every way."

"Kate is a little fool. Robert Trewavas is well enough. But it is absurd to raise him to the level of a hero."

"You think very highly of him, Aunt Dorothy?"

"I think very well of his histrionic powers. I don't know that I have such a very high opinion of the man myself."

"Neither have I, Lady Dorothy," remarked a tall, dark young man, who was leaning with negligent grace on the back of Maud Thornhill's chair. "He is not thorough-bred; and it is curious how it shows in a thousand odd little ways."

"You know him?" said the girl, lifting a shining pair of violet eyes to Wyndham Lockhart's face.

"Yes; very well. He is a member of the Rattle-trap Club, to which I belong, and half-a-dozen other places of the kind. I have had many opportunities of studying this actor's foibles and failings, and I, like your aunt, have not a high opinion of his disposition."

"Still, one must always admire genius," exclaimed Miss Thornhill, reluctant to listen to any disparagement of her hero.

"He is hardly a genius," objected Lockhart, who, in common with many other young men of undeniable high birth and breeding, was rather, not to say very, jealous of this actor, who their keen eyes, sharpened by envy, saw was not quite thoroughbred, not quite like one of themselves, lacking many little attributes, ways, courtesies, which go far towards making a perfect gentleman.

"I cannot tell you," she replied. "I have not seen him act. Yet I am sure he is very, very clever."

"Of course the fellow is," struck in her cousin, Cyril Glendenning. "There can be no two opinions about that. He is splendid on the stage; off it is another matter. A man may make a capital Macbeth, and still be an arrant snob in everyday life."

"I don't think he is quite that," protested Lady Dorothy, who had a weakness for talent, and filled her little pill-box house in Belgravia nightly with all sorts of oddities, who were, or who were reputed to be, clever, and after whom the whole world ran. So that it was always possible to meet at her house with a few who painted flesh tints exquisitely, but whose father had dwelt and flourished in Shoreditch as a seller of old and discarded raiment, or an Italian with a heavenly voice who, with her maternal relative, a score of years before, sold flowers, attired in picturesque rags, on the Pincian at Rome; or a German who played ravishingly on the violin, and hadn't the slightest idea who his father was; or a Russian who wrote thrilling narratives of Siberia, and hadn't put his nose within the walls of St. Petersburg; or a lovely Pole, who was mixed up with several secret societies, and therefore was obliged to bring her bewitching person to reside in free old England, and so on, and so on, through the whole gamut of celebrities.

"You are partial, aunt," returned the young man, shortly, for he didn't like Lady Dorothy's taking up the cudgels in defence of Robert Trewavas at all.

The fact was, he loved, and had loved his cousin Maud since she was a little girl, and he was intensely—almost insanely—jealous of any other man paying her the slightest attention.

Up to the present she had shown no preference for any of the moths who buzzed round her, and he, therefore, had little to grumble at; but now she showed such a strong interest in this "actor fellow," that all his fears were up in arms, and he began to experience torturing fears lest she should be dazzled by the meretricious attractions of the Cornishman, who already had won, and worn, and cast aside so many hearts with callous indifference.

Cyril Glendenning knew him as he was.

Maud Thornhill would see him surrounded by false splendour, clapped and applauded by admiring hundreds, and he quaked for the impression it would make on her young and impressionable mind.

She was only eighteen and had been brought up in the seclusion of her father's lovely Sussex home. This was her first season in town.

She had no experience of the world and its wicked ways, and was just the sort of girl to fall a victim to a flashy, good-looking fellow, who was a sort of idol with the multitude, whom she saw caressed, flattered, run after, made much of by high and low, given the *entrées* to many houses where better folk were excluded.

All that kind of thing would dazzle and blind her, blind her to his shortcomings; in her eyes he would be that most dangerous thing to a young girl—a hero!

"You are partial, aunt," said the young man.

"At least I am never unjust," she retorted, significantly.

"I am not, I'm sure," declared Glendenning with an accession of virtuous indignation.

"Of course not; men never are," said one another. Never! I am quite sure of that!"

"Hush!" exclaimed Maud, who was sitting with her eyes riveted on the curtain. "It is going to begin."

The play was *The Lady of Lyons*, and Trewavas, as the gardener-hero, looked exceedingly handsome, a typical, a most desirable lover. The part suited him. He acted splendidly.

To see him one would think he was the most fervent, the most devoted, the most despairing of lovers. Miss Thornhill watched every movement, every gesture with breathless interest. She had never seen anything like it.

No very brilliant theatrical star had beamed upon their part of Sussex, so it was quite a revelation to her, and one that entranced.

"Well, what do you think of this acting?" asked Glendenning with some show of impatience as the curtain descended for the last time, and thunders of applause were calling the favourite to the footlights once more.

"It is superb, splendid," she sighed, in a sort of ecstasy.

"Ah! there he is," as Claude Melnotte appeared, leading Pauline by the hand, and, detaching a spray of white roses that she wore at her breast, she leant forward and threw them just at his feet.

With an upward glance and graceful bow of thanks, he picked up the spray, and kept his eyes fixed on the fair donor till the falling curtain hid her from sight.

Such flattery was grateful to his insatiable vanity, incense burned on the shrine of what he called his genius, and he smiled as his eyes met hers, while Glendenning crushed back the curse which rushed to his lips, for he would have given a great deal to have possessed the roses that had nestled in his cousin's white breast.

"How I should like to know him!" she exclaimed.

"Would you?" queried Lady Dorothy, a queer smile on her face, as she saw Cyril's angry looks.

"Very, very much."

"Then your wish shall be gratified."

"How, aunt?"

"You are coming to supper with me to-night?"

"Yes, papa said so."

"And so is Robert Trewavas."

"No! Really?"

"Yes. Really!"

"How delightful. I am glad!"

"Perhaps you won't admire him quite so much off the stage," suggested Lockhart.

"I am sure I shall," Miss Thornhill told him with conviction.

"The spangles, and satins and silks, add greatly to a fellow's looks, I can tell you," broke in Cyril. "Many a man who looks commonplace and ugly in a chimney-pot hat and a frock coat, would look handsome in a fantastic garb such as Trewavas wore to-night."

"Possibly," replied his cousin, coldly, "only Mr. Trewavas could never look commonplace or ugly, no matter what he wore."

"A girl's verdict!" muttered Cyril.

"Shall we go now, aunt?" rising as though to put an end to the discussion, and accepting Lockhart's assistance with her white mantle.

"Yes, my dear."



"Papa, are you ready?"  
 "Quite, my love," returned Squire Thornhill, with alacrity, for being used to the country and early rising and retiring, he found London hours rather trying. However, he was destined not to get to roost until late that night, for Lady Dorothy's supper parties were enjoyable things, and her guests, as a rule, were in no hurry to leave her hospitable house, remaining frequently till the small hours of the morning.

## CHAPTER II.

THE guests assembled that night proved no exception to the general rule. The Squire was weary and tired long before his pretty daughter felt the slightest sensation of fatigue. But then he had only a stout old dowager, with an abnormally red face, a palpable wig, and a prodigious appetite beside him, while Maude was escorted in to supper by no less a personage than Trewavas himself—a privilege which she was fully sensible of, and that made the other women present, both married and single, young and old, frightfully jealous and envious. There were some there who had declared their affection for the young Cornishman in no measured terms, and been laughed at for their folly, while others were quite ready to do so on the slightest encouragement, and looked upon it as a lost opportunity, for Trewavas, seemed quite engrossed by his young companion.

In truth, she was more to his liking than many of the women he met in society. She was fresh, unaffected, and evidently was so seriously inclined to regard him as a demigod; adulation and flattery were very sweet to him when poured out by rosy lips whose owner was in the heyday of youth and beauty, and who was, moreover, an heiress, and closely allied to many of the great ones of this world.

"And so you really like my conception of Claude Melnotte's character, Miss Thornhill?" he was saying as he trifled with the liver wing of a chicken, and threw somewhat bold glances of admiration at his companion.

"It is splendid, magnificent," she replied, with enthusiasm.

"It is really very good of you to say so," he smiled.

"I have never seen any one else in the character," she told him.

"Comparisons are odious. Nevertheless, when you do see some one else playing the garden-hero you will probably prefer their acting to mine."

"I am quite certain I shall not," she assured him, warmly. "I shall never like any one's rendering of the part as well as yours."

"You are most kind," he said, with a low bow that manœuvred a little of the boards and footlights.

"Not at all. I am only sincere. Your acting is so realistic, so emotional. You seemed to lose your own identity in that of Claude Melnotte, and be only that daring, yet despairing, lover."

"You could not pay me a higher compliment: that is what we all try to do."

"And few succeed in?" she questioned, her bright violet eyes fixed questioningly on his handsome face.

"Certainly some of the members of my profession always retain certain peculiarities of manner or speech which marks them as Smith, Brown, or Jones, and not as Hamlet, Iago, or Macbeth."

"It is, then, the highest art, the most to be desired thing, to be able to identify yourself with the character you play?"

"We think it so."

"You have that power in the greatest extent. It was impossible while watching

you and listening to you to think that you were anyone else but Lord Lytton's hero: your love, your despair, your rage, all seemed so terribly, painfully at times, real."

"I am glad to hear you say so, though I regret having pained you."

"The pleasure you gave me far outweighed the pain," she told him, with that artless manner of hers, that conveyed the purest flattery, the most delightful incense that could have been offered at his shrine.

"You have seen many actors, I presume, *ma'm'selle*?" he asked.

"No, very few. We went the other evening to the Casket Theatre, but it seemed to me there, that there was nothing but scenery. They were beautiful pictures, and the rapid changes, and the life-like accessories were absolutely astonishing to uninitiated eyes like mine. Still, the actors seemed mere puppets, the actresses pretty, well-dressed dolls, who moved and spoke like automata, and showed no more force, realism, or passion than they would. I wonder the management would spend so much in mounting of the piece when the company is so poor."

"That is just it. The beautiful scenery is designed to draw the attention of the audience from the actors, or, as you phrase it, the puppets. Their shortcomings, then, are less noticed. The attention of the on-lookers is caught by gay dresses, and pretty surroundings, while the stick-like movements and bad declamation of the company is suffered to pass by without very severe criticism. The cast at the Casket is very poor, not fit for a London theatre."

"Will you believe me, Mr. Trewavas, when I say that that was exactly my idea. I have seen better ones near us at E—"

"I can quite believe it. Do you go often to the theatre?"

"No. You know, or rather you do not know, of course, that we live in Sussex."

"A very charming county!"

"I think it lovely. But then, as it has always been my home, and nearly all my life has been spent there, it is hardly to be wondered at."

"Certainly not," he agreed, with an admiring glance at the fair young face flushed from excitement with a delicate bloom that heightened the lustre of the great purple eyes.

"We live near Pevensey, and the old Castle is one of my favourite haunts."

"A very charming one, I am sure, though I have never had the good fortune to see it."

"You ought to see it."

"I shall hope to do so now, ere long," he rejoined, in a pointed manner, that made the wild rose bloom in the girl's cheek deepen to damask. "But I generally go when the season is over—abroad, and then for a few weeks, to my native county."

"By Tre, Pol, or Pen, you may know the Cornishmen," she quoted, gaily. "I presume you mean Cornwall?"

"My home is there—my beautiful, dearly-beloved home!"

He was careful, however, not to add that his "dearly loved home" consisted of a small shop at Helston, where his widowed mother sold needles, and pins, and worsteds, and canvas, and all manner of fancy things, and who was a good-natured, simple soul, quite content to live out her uneventful life in quiet respectability and semi-genteel poverty in fair Cornwall, while her good-for-nothing son strutted the boards of the London theatres nightly, and drew fairly good salaries; which he spent in a reckless fashion, trying to keep pace with several young noblemen, and men of good birth and fortune who laughed and sneered at the "actor fellow," even while they envied

him his talent and successes with the fair sex.

"It is a very beautiful county, is it not?" she asked, deeply interested in all that concerned him.

"Very. The coast scenery is amongst the finest in the world. It is wild, rugged, magnificent. The succession of headlands at Prussia Cove, each one growing dimmer and dimmer until the last, the Lizard Point, looks faint and shadowy against the horizon, is inexpressibly grand and beautiful. No pen, no tongue can do the scene justice. It must be seen to be appreciated at its true value."

"How much I should like to see it!" she exclaimed, her young, ardent fancy caught by his enthusiasm.

"It is a pleasure to come," he smiled. "I sometimes wish that I had never seen it, in order that I might go and feast my eyes on it for the first time. You ought to try and persuade your father to take you down there this autumn."

"Ah! that will be impossible," with a soft, little sigh.

"May I ask why?"

"He loves Leonceux too much."

"The name of your place, I presume?"

"Yes. We are going to stay in town altogether two months now. I am quite certain he will not leave home again this year."

"I see. I am sorry. I might have had the pleasure of meeting you at fair Kynance Cove, that Swinburne has rendered immortal by his tuneful lines."

"Why?"

"I am going to stay at Lizard Town, which is just near, this August, to study the part, of Romeo, which I have not yet played."

"Indeed! You find it necessary to avoid fashionable seaside places?"

"Yes. Quiet is necessary to masters such a part properly."

"So I should think. You find it at Kynance?"

"Yes. There I can declaim to sea, and shore, and sky, uninterrupted, and inspired by the rugged magnificence of the scene, I do it better than I should elsewhere."

"I understand, I am only sorry I shall not have a chance of hearing you declaim."

"And I that I shall not see you there. However, I hope we may meet often in town during the remainder of the season," a wish that Maud echoed in her heart, and a wish that was gratified, not once but many times.

This world after all is very small. We constantly meet people we know in most unexpected holes and corners, and Lady Dorothy's connection was a large one. She knew many of the *crème de la crème* of society, as well as its more Bohemian brethren, and not a night passed without her having two or three places to go to after court, opera, or theatre.

At many of these places Robert Trewavas appeared and, paid marked attention to Miss Thornhill, whose pretty fresh face and native manners really pleased his somewhat jaded taste. However, he was not in love with her. She was hardly his style. Being fair himself he not unnaturally admired dark women, and Miss Thornhill was very, very fair, bordering almost on the insipid; her skin, hair, and eyebrows being as white and light as they possibly could be; nevertheless, she was greatly admired ranking quite as a beauty, and as it was pleasant to his insatiable vanity to be able to turn and sway her as he chose, and claim her hand for almost any dance, despite the protests of other aspirants, he exercised his power somewhat mercilessly.

Moreover, she was a person of some importance by right of birth in that gay

world where he was only received and tolerated on account of his talent, and that made him all the more eager to show the men of her order how far higher he stood in her good graces than they did.

Still he had no idea of marrying her or even of making love seriously until one morning, as he was lounging in the reading-room of the Rattle-trap Club, enveloped in the sheets of the *Times*, he overheard some sneering remarks made about himself and Miss Thornhill, and the absolute absurdity of his aspiring to her hand that made his blood boil, and determined him on a course that he bitterly rued afterwards.

That night he met Miss Thornhill at a dance at the Countess of Marshshire's. It was drawing near the close of the season; the fashionables were flitting away from town. Soon the parks and the Row would be empty, the clubs deserted, the theatres sparsely attended, the opera over, and he knew if he meant to show the world that a mere actor, sans-birth, breeding, money, like himself, could win where they failed, that he must do it at once or lose his opportunity. In a week she and her father were returning to Essex.

The Marshshire's house was a very charming one, situated a little way out of London to the north. It stood in the midst of beautiful grounds, in which were many noble old trees, shady avenues, pretty walks, level lawns; these grounds were lighted up with hundreds of Chinese lanterns and fairy lights. Here and there little tables were dotted about, and couples after dancing could stroll about, and regale themselves on strawberries, ices, and other dainties, in the cool, under the canopy of heaven, instead of in the heat and glare of the refreshment room. The whole front of the house was brilliantly lighted with crescents and stars, and in the middle was a device showing the Marshshire coat of arms. The dusky oak-pannelled hall was a-bloom with masses of beautiful flowers.

They massed in the corners of the ball-room around huge and picturesque blocks of ice, over which crept ferns and mosses in realistic fashion, balls of lovely sweet-smelling roses hung from the ceilings, and garlands of exotics festooned the doorways, that were draped with filmy white muslin and lace. The band, a celebrated one, was hidden behind a screen of palms and broad-leaved plants, and dispensed melodious airs unseen. The floor was polished as glass and as slippery, and the whole place was more like fairyland than anything else.

Maud was looking very well. She wore a pale cream gown of some diaphanous material, draped with water-lilies, and wore no ornaments, her white throat and arms being bare, save for the suede gloves that just reached the dimpled elbow, pink and plump as a baby's.

Trewavas, as he put his arm round her waist and whirled her away down the room, thought he might do worse than make her his wife. For, of course, he never doubted her ready acceptance of his hand and heart, or what did duty in his breast for that useful, but sometimes inconvenient member.

He was late, and her programme was nearly full; still, he took it, and coolly wrote his name over several others, without giving a thought to the mobbishness of such an act, perhaps not even being aware of it.

"I shall never dare to appear for the next dance," she told him, flushed and smiling, when the waltz was over.

"Why not?" he inquired, looking down at her with a very lover-like air.

"Because I am engaged to Mr. Lumley, brother to the man I was to have danced this with."

"Never mind. Let me have it."

"You have so many already."

"Only six," he objected.

"And there are but ten more altogether."

"Well?"

"I shall be obliged to keep out of the way. See; he is looking for me now."

"Then we will give him a chase. It seems delightfully cool out there," glancing at the garden. "Shall we go?"

Of course she assented. Equally, of course, he led her to the quietest and dimmest spot in the grounds, though there were not many dim spots, owing to the brilliant illuminations, and sitting very close beside her he took her hand in his, and began to tell the old, old story.

He was a perfect lover on the stage. It was, in fact, his forte, and as far as wooing went he was a perfect lover off the stage.

He knew just the right thing to say, and said it; just the right thing to do, and did it. He was tender, impassioned, impressive, imploring.

A young girl like Maud Thornhill stood no chance against his sophistries and pleadings, and after she returned to the ballroom at Marshshire House she had promised to become his wife, and he had the right to frown away all other pretenders for her hand even in the gay and giddy dance.

### CHAPTER III.

THE course of Maud's true love hardly ran smooth at first.

Squire Thornhill was very angry when he heard of his daughter's engagement.

He was old-fashioned and conservative, and it seemed to him hardly right that an actor, a creature of paint and spangle, of the green-room and the footlights, should aspire to his child's hand to become his son-in-law. It was a shock to his prejudices, and like the average Britisher, he possessed a good share of them.

However, after awhile he was brought to a more reasonable frame of mind, and gave his consent to the engagement. Maud was his only child, he could not resist her pleadings. Moreover, his sister-in-law, Lady Dorothy, had a long and confidential talk with him, after which he seemed reconciled to the inevitable, and received Trewavas with fairly good grace, which cannot be said of Cyril Glendenning, who was nearly mad with rage and despair, and could not bring himself to be even commonly civil to his successful rival, whereby he brought upon himself the displeasure of the girl he loved.

Nevertheless, he accepted his uncle's invitation to Léoncourt, and endured the torture of seeing the lovers together.

It did not last very long, however. The young actor soon grew tired of the quiet monotony of the Thornhill's country home, and if the truth must be told, a little weary of his pretty fiancée and her plainly-shown devotion.

She was never tired of being in his society, of listening to pretty speeches, giving sweet smiles in return. But he found it boring to keep up this state of high pressure, and after a fortnight of rustic billing and cooing he pleaded the necessity of studying Romeo, and departed, regretted by no one save Maud, who sent him six closely-written sheets every week, to which daily and affectionate effusions he replied by one, or at the most, two short epistles per week.

He found Cornwall Kynance Cove as lovely as ever, the Imperial Hotel as comfortable as usual, a few pleasant people there, not too crowded.

Altogether, he found it a pleasant change from Léoncourt; he used to go daily to Kynance Cove, and seated at the base of its lovely serpentine marble rocks, study

Shakespeare to an accompaniment of waves, dashing, thundering and breaking into surf at his feet, infinitely preferable, he thought it, to wandering along the tame Sussex coast listening to Maud's childish chatter and endless assurances of undying love and everlasting affection.

It was his native air, and it was like strong wine to him. It made his pulses throb riotously, his blood bound through his veins like quicksilver. It seemed to bring new youth and strength to him. He grew boyish; it was so different from London and the life he had been leading. The pure, strong breezes with their fresh flavour of the sea, the great, restless, tossing mass of water, the iron-bound coast, the huge grey rocks that thrust their heads above the pellucid waves, a warning and a terror to all mariners, the queer birds that wheeled and swirled above the cliffs' tops, the calm, the quiet, the holy, restful peace that over-shadowed all.

Monotonous, it might be a little, nevertheless delightful. Soothing to the nerves, refreshing to the brain, invigorating to the body.

He wanted nothing more, and told himself he could stay there months listening to the dirge of the waves, and cry of the sea-birds, feeling the soft winds play tenderly on his brow, and ruffle with gentle touch the crisp, gold curls crowning it, lounging with careless ease on the rock-strewn beach, rainbow in its variety of hues, studying Romeo's amorous part, throwing himself heart and soul into it, and fancying he was really enamoured of the ill-starred daughter of the Capulets, her devoted, despairing lover.

He meant that his impersonation of this character should add greatly to his fame and repute.

Like many of low birth blessed with talent his thirst for success, praise, glory, was insatiable. He loathed his obscure origin, though he loved his plebeian mother in his own selfish fashion; and was drawn back to her vicinity yearly by some unknown and irresistible power, that conquered all his prejudices and ambitions; and while in Cornwall, though he did not stay actually at Helston, he never chose a place very far away, and went to see her two or three times a week—a proceeding which gave the homely old Cornishwoman unqualified delight. For, according to her way of thinking, there was no one in the whole world to equal her Bob!

The warm, bright days glided away, full of the splendour of summer, that rich glow and glamour of sunshine, blossom, and leaf, and Robert Trewavas was enjoying it to the full, when something occurred which altered the whole tenor of his existence, filled his life with a mad, wild delight, and a heavy burden of grief and remorse, and then—

But we are anticipating.

Towards the close of a brilliant August day on his return to the Imperial he became aware of an unusual bustle and excitement amongst the men and maids of the establishment.

"What is the matter, my Chloe?" he asked of a rosy-cheeked wench as he chucked her under the chin. "You seem to be hurried and flurried."

"Oh, sir, yes," she gaspingly replied. "The great furrin' lady's bell rang a minute ago, and I must hurry."

"Foreign lady!" he repeated. "Who is she—a new arrival?"

"Yes, sir; a lady an' her husband and daughter, and they da say as how she be a dukess."

"Oh, bother!" muttered Trewavas.

"Anyhow, they're very grand folk!"

"Possibly. Wish they'd kept away, though," he said to himself, impatiently, as he went to change his velvet lounging coat



for something more sober and suitable for dinner.

A little later on, when he strolled carelessly into the dining-room and took his accustomed seat at the table, he saw opposite him the "furrin" strangers.

The gentleman was old, with white hair, a snowy, patriarchal beard, and clear-cut, aristocratic features.

His companions were both young and beautiful, and looked at the first glance like sisters, but on closer observation he saw that though a striking resemblance existed between them, there were certain points that showed a difference in their ages.

The figure of one, though gracefully rounded, was matured, while the lithe slenderness of the other showed girlhood was scarcely yet passed.

They both possessed clear, warm, brunette complexions, with masses of inky-black hair, brows to match, and large, lustrous brown eyes.

Here the resemblance ceased, for the elder lady's features were of almost severely classical regularity, while the younger's were irregular, the nose shorter, the mouth broader, the curve of cheek and throat not so faultless. Still what she lost in regularity she gained in expression, her face being the more pleasant and womanly, the eyes more tender and soft, her whole appearance indicating a sweet and amiable temperament.

They attracted the young actor's attention, for they were certainly striking-looking women, and he began to wonder which he admired most—a question which he found it very difficult to answer, not only then, but later on, for in his usual vacillating and uncertain style, he saw points to admire in each one, and as he discovered fresh beauties in the younger lady's face it would decide him to give the palm to her, until the surreptitious study of her companion's face would cause him to alter his mind and decide that she was the greater beauty of the two.

After dinner he lounged into the drawing-room—in contradiction to his usual custom, for he generally sought the open air, the boundless breadth of sea and sky—in the hope of seeing them, but they did not appear again that night.

Nor was he more fortunate the next morning at breakfast, for they had that meal served in their private apartments, and he went out as usual to study in the Cove, and remained out till late in the afternoon.

He had strolled no further than he had at first intended, and warned by the rapidly incoming tide that was swirling in with a monotonous lap-lapping sound, dashing against the great masses of rock that, detached from the mainland, lay about on the beach like dark sterile islets.

He was retracing his steps somewhat rapidly, when a faint cry from seaward attracted his attention; he turned instantly, and saw on a great mass of rocks, already surrounded by the surging waves, two ladies.

They waved their handkerchiefs when they saw him turn, and called out something which he could not clearly distinguish, for the wind was blowing off shore and carried the sound of their voices out to sea; only he made up his mind at once, and kicking off his boots, walked quietly into the water, which was now about two feet deep between him and the rock.

After splashing through about half the distance, he recognised the ladies as the Marquise Villano and her daughter Théodora; he had learnt the names that morning from a waiter at the Imperial, and hurried on as well as he could through the waves that broke and dashed against his legs with considerable force.

"Monsieur, a thousand pardons for troubling you!" exclaimed the Marquise, as he neared, bending forward, "but we are so terrified, we know not how to reach the shore now that the waves have cut off our retreat."

"Don't mention troubling me," he replied with alacrity, "I am only too happy to be of service to you, though I hardly know how you will get back now," with a doubtful glance at the rapidly deepening water.

"How was it you let the water cut off your retreat?"

"We were sketching up on the top, and never noticed how these luffy waves were creeping, creeping, creeping up, until they had surrounded the rock."

The Marquise had a slight accent which was very pretty, and seemed to make her lovely mouth more kissable as she lisped the words.

"Very unfortunate."

"It eese. Can you get us a boat?"

"Quite impossible, that is to say within a reasonable time. Of course, if you like to wait I will go over to Lizard Town and get them to row round for you, only it is such a dangerous rock-bound coast that they will be some time coming."

"How long?" she asked, looking anxiously around.

"Between two and three hours. I should have to walk over the cliffs, seek for a boat, get it manned, and then there is the pull round, which will be slow work against wind and tide."

"What are we to do!" claimed Mam'selle Villano, clasping her hands together with a gesture of despair. "I shall be terrified to remain here for three hours. Besides, the water will be up here soon."

"To this ledge," replied Trewavas. "You must climb up again to a higher place, if you decide to wait here."

"What else can we do?" questioned the Marquise, bending her lustrous southern eyes on him.

"If you will permit it," he said, with some hesitation, "I will carry you to the shore."

"Oh, no!" murmured the daughter, a deep blush suffusing her cheek and brow.

"Is there no other alternative?" asked her mother.

"None, save the one I have given you," he replied, "unless you wade, and I cannot recommend you to do that. The water will be up to your waists; you will be drenched through, and then you have to get from here to Lizard Town."

"True; and we have no carriage, having walked here."

"Then let me persuade you to permit me," holding out his arms.

The Marquise stood hesitatingly, looking down at the tall muscular young fellow just below her, on whose breast she must lie if she decided to let him take her to land, while he stood gazing up at her, curiosity and eagerness in his gaze.

She stood half crouched against the rock, a lithe, graceful figure, one slender jewelled hand pressed against the dusky marble that formed such a picturesque background, the other holding up her dainty white dress that thus held revealed her small delicate feet and arched insteps.

The setting sun shone redly on her, gleamed in her dark eyes and hair, painted her cheek with a rich glow, showed the rosy hue of neck and arm through the semi-transparent cambric and the voluptuous curve of her bosom.

"Come!" he urged.

"It will be dark soon;" she said, interrogatively.

"Yes. Before a boat could possibly arrive."

"It would be terrifying in the dark!"

"Horrible! come!"

He pressed closer to the rock, still holding out his arms; a moment she hesitated, then yielding to an imperative gesture from him she stooped forward, and he, twining his arms round her, lifted her off the rock, and turning commenced to splash laboriously towards the shore, through the swirling, curling, foam-crested waves that now reached some way above his knees.

Difficult and fatiguing as it was he yet experienced a strange wild thrill as he felt her soft arm clinging half diffidently round his neck, her warm breath hot on his cheek, her exquisite head close to his own. He felt as though he could have tramped on for ever holding that charming burden close to his heart. But all things come to an end sooner or later, pleasant as well as painful, and after a short, sharp struggle through the surf he reached dry land, and set down the Marquise on the beach beyond the reach of the murmuring hungry waves that seemed so eager to engulf her. Then, without a word, he dashed once more into the water, but saw to his amazement a slender, white-robed figure battling unsteadily against the Atlantic rollers that threatened to swamp her, and sweep her off her feet.

"Why did you not wait?" he exclaimed, reproachfully, as he reached her side.

"I did not dare to remain alone," replied Mam'selle Villano, with a deep blush, and perhaps a little want of truth, for the fact was she felt she could not lie in the embrace of this handsome stranger whose admiring gaze she had encountered more than once at the *table d'hôte* the night before, notwithstanding that it was almost an imperative necessity that she should do so.

"I made as much haste as possible," he rejoined, slightly piqued.

"It was marvellous the rate at which you went," she told him admiringly. "How could you carry my mother? How strong you must be!"

"I am not weak," he laughed somewhat mollified by that incense dear to his vain soul—praise—as he drew her hand firmly through his arm, and helped her to toil slowly towards the shore.

He did not offer to carry her. Some instinct told him she would not like it—that her maiden modesty would be offended at the suggestion—so he only held her hand firmly, and guided her steadily through the surf.

"How can we ever thank you?" cried the Marquise as he stood once more beside her on *terra firma*.

"Don't try to, please," he answered.

"But for you," she went on with a little shudder of horror, "we should have spent several terrible hours on that rock! You have been our saviour, our protector!"

"I am only too happy to have been of any service to you," he declared, earnestly. Then, turning to Mademoiselle Villano, who stood shivering beside them, he said, "Mam'selle, you should hasten to remove your wet things, or the penalty will be a severe cold."

"Thé, my love, you are dripping! Why not have let M'sieu Trewavas have carried you?" asked her mother, as though for the first time becoming aware of her daughter's damp condition.

"I did not dare remain there alone," replied the girl, casting down her eyes.

"Let me advise you to set out at once to wards the hotel," suggested Trewavas.

"It will be a long walk for Thé in her wet gown."

"I hope we may be able to borrow a conveyance at the beginning of the road. Some people were picnicking here, they may let us have their carriage to drive over to Lizard Town."

"I hope they will," said the Marquise. "You are saturated, M'sieur Trewavas!"

"It is of no consequence," he laughed. "Rather pleasant this hot weather. But how do you know my name?"

"Who does not know you?" she replied, with subtle, yet, perhaps, scarcely truthful flattery. "Your name is celebrated, your face well-known. Your photographs are sold in Paris, Vienna, St. Petersburg, and my own dear Rome."

"I understand."

"I adore genius," she told him, turning those lustrous southern eyes on him that had been the undoing of many and many a good man; "and I long to see you act."

"I only hope, then, that you will have an opportunity ere long of honouring my poor performance of Romeo with your presence."

"Are you studying that part?"

"Yes. I have never yet played it."

"And when is the first performance to take place?"

But before he could answer they came in view of the picnic party just stowing away their baskets and hampers previous to departing, and he hurried on to explain the situation, and beg their assistance.

It was accorded with ready good nature.

They were going the other way, towards Helston, but they agreed to wait while their coachman drove them over to Lizard Town; and Trewavas, knowing there was no other chance of getting a vehicle there so late in the afternoon, hastily thanked them, and helping in his fair companion, urged the coachman to drive as hard as he could to the Imperial Hotel.

#### CHAPTER IV.

The Marquis of Villano, who happened to be at the door on the arrival of Trewavas and his companions, was somewhat alarmed at the damp and bedraggled appearance of his daughter; but was quickly reassured by his wife, who introduced the actor in rather a theatrical style as their "preserver."

The old man was profuse in his courteous thanks, and that little episode was the beginning of an acquaintance that had dire results.

It became evident before long that the Marquise Villano had a *penchant* for the good-looking young actor.

She was a thorough woman of the world, with a considerable knowledge of human nature, its weaknesses and vanities, and was a past mistress in the arts of provocation and fascination, and before long Robert found himself in the full swing of a lovely flirtation with Octavia Marquise Villano, while her daughter kept herself shyly in the background and took little or no notice of him beyond what mere politeness demanded.

This behaviour piqued the young man excessively. One or even two conquests were not enough for his insatiable vanity.

He wanted the whole feminine world at his feet. He was so accustomed to being spoiled and petted by all women, young, old and middle-aged, that he could not understand how one of the softer sex could possibly see and be acquainted with him and yet withstand the charm of his handsome face and glib tongue.

The Villano seemed, however, to possess this power. Very far from seeking his society, she positively avoided it; and seldom joined in the many excursions and drives her mother and Trewavas took together. When it was a general affair and several people went she would go too, but not when she made the third—the odd man out.

To show his indifference to this demoiseille he rushed headlong into a tremendous show

of devotion for the Marquise, and reckless of the consequences, posed as her lover.

He paid her extravagant compliments, sighed, pressed her hands, gazed into her lustrous eyes tenderly, sought her advice on the most trivial matters, always allowed himself to be swayed by her opinions, sent her bouquets of the loveliest flowers he could get, drove her out whenever she wished to go, walked with her along the beach, showed her the Lion, the Lizard and the Stay, and all the other spots of note or interest in the neighbourhood, and succeeded in impressing her with the idea that he was desperately, if hopelessly, in love with her, and actually almost persuaded himself that such was the case too, and that it would be well for his own peace of mind if he fled from her too alluring presence before it was too late.

In the meantime, Octavia Villano had forgotten her duty and allegiance to her noble husband, whose trust and faith in her were so perfect that he never thought to question her actions, to think it wrong that she should be so much with this clever, sparkling young actor. Like to like, youth to youth.

He was old and hoary, she was still in the heyday of bloom and beauty. It was only natural, he reasoned, that she should seek the society of one more her own age.

He forgot, or perhaps he had never cared to think and believe that she had married him for his wealth and title, urged so to do when only seventeen by her parents.

She had been a good enough wife to him for nineteen years, even if a trifle cold and indifferent. But then she had never met anyone for whom she had felt any particular liking.

It was different now with Robert Trewavas. He had awakened in the unhappy woman's breast one of those mad, violent passions which seldom are awakened when the love is likely to come to a legitimate conclusion and satisfactory ending.

The fact of her being tied to another man, of having no chance of becoming Robert's wife, added fuel to the fire, made her passion more absorbing, more violent. It was an idolatry she felt for him.

She loved every turn of his head, every gesture of his strong, white hands every ring of merry laugh, every echo of his manly tones. She loved him from the crown of his head to the soles of his feet.

She worshipped his talent, she adored his physical beauty, she was his utterly, entirely, irredeemably.

That she shed most bitter tears of humiliation and anguish when she first discovered the real state of her heart is true; still it is equally true that she made no effort to break the bonds that held her, no struggle to go back to her duty. She simply let herself glide down the hill that led to the precipice of dishonour, while Trewavas, not being in love with the girl to whom he had pledged his troth, considered himself free as he liked.

To amuse himself, ah—yes! But he had reckoned without his host. "We begin love when we like, and end it when we can," said the old saw, and no doubt there is a great deal of truth in it.

At any rate, he certainly had not taken the trouble to gauge the depths of the fiery, tempestuous nature of Octavia Villano. She was a lovely woman—voluptuous, seductive. It was pleasant to play at love with her; as to anything serious, he never gave it a thought.

He meant to marry Maud Thornhill, because she was rich, fashionable, well-bred, well-connected, and because he knew, or thought, that her grand friends would help to raise him to his wife's level. He was so

ambitious; he longed for a title, power, wealth—everything that would aggrandise him. He appreciated foreign titles at their full worth.

He was well aware the Marquise could not do much towards raising him to that position which his ambition and vanity urged him on to attain; so while he dallied with her in a tender fashion on the Cornish beach and by the Cornish hills, he wrote regularly to his intended, and delighted her young and innocent heart by writing more love-like epistles than he had ever done before.

"Where have you been, Roberto, *mie*?" asked the Marquise one morning, as Trewavas strolled out to the garden of the hotel, considerably later than he usually did, and where she had been awaiting his coming with ill-concealed impatience, and a great longing for his presence, the sight of his handsome face, the ring of his musical tones. "Where have you been?" she repeated, her glowing, ardent eyes devouring his face.

"Writing a letter," he replied, smiling down at her in the tender, false fashion that had become habitual to him.

"A letter?" she asked, with emphasis.

"Yes."

"It must have been an important one to take so long!"

"It was," he admitted, unguardedly.

"To a man or a woman?"

"A woman," he replied, feeling that he had committed himself to a certain extent, and that it would be useless to lie to her entirely.

"A young one?"

"Yes."

"Pretty?"

"Hardly. Insipid," he said, nonchalantly enough, though he felt very angry at her persistent cross-questioning and evident curiosity.

"Is she anything to you?"

"We are not related," he returned, coldly.

"Are you going to be?"

"My dear Marquise, I have told you that I am an only child. I have no brother to give me a sister-in-law."

"Yes, I remember. Still, it may be that you think to give yourself a bride?"

They had strolled from the garden down a lane on to the beach. It was deserted; there was not a creature in sight, save the gulls that whirled and shrieked overhead.

"A bride!" he exclaimed, as though surprised, not very well knowing what to say with those dark, reproachful eyes bent on him.

"Yes, Roberto!" she cried, suddenly, in tones of piercing anguish, "do you love *zero* woman?"

"How can you ask me such a question?" smiled this miserable deceiver. "Would it be possible for me to love anyone save your dear self?"

"You mean that—really mean it, *mie caro*?" she cried, her bosom heaving stormily under its muslin covering.

"My dearest, yes."

"Ah, Roberto, I live again!" she said, drawing a long, sobbing breath, and casting herself into his arms, kissing his throat and face with passionate abandonment of self, while he caressed the beautiful, dusky-tinted head that lay on his shoulder, and crushed her against his breast.

"You love but me, *amé*?" she whispered, her lips close to his, her breath hot on his cheek.

"Only you, Octavia," returned this craven hound, who had not manliness enough to own that he was bound in honour to another woman.

"I could not live without you!" she panted.



"You love me too well, sweetheart," he murmured, caressingly; nevertheless, feeling that this desperate affection he had awakened in her bosom was likely to prove a trifle inconvenient.

"Ah! Do not say that?" she implored.

"Why not?"

"It makes me think you do not care for me."

"Why?"

"If you loved me as I love you, you would crave for more and more. Nothing would satisfy you—nothing be too much. I could never say to you, 'you love me too much.' Rather should I say 'love me more and more, so that you become part of my being, are twined and twisted into the thread of my existence, its best part, its chiefest delight, its crowning glory.'"

"Ah, Octavia, you Italians know what love really means."

"And do not you English?" she asked, raising a pair of gloriously dark orbs to his.

"In a lesser degree," he replied, "we are not so impressed."

"Would that you were!" she sighed, resting her soft, glowing cheeks against his, would that you could love as I do, to the forgetting of everything—honour, duty, self.

"Ah, dearest," was all the audible reply he made; to himself he was saying: "Precious good thing I can't and don't, or no end of a hole we should be in!"

He had to listen for a considerable time longer to the passionate words of the Marquise, and when at last he did escape, he went back to the hotel, locked himself into his room, and reviewed the whole case calmly. In his usual selfish fashion he had not thought of, or considered, the woman to whom he was engaged while he was amusing himself in Cornwall: now it occurred to him that he had better consider her a little, and it struck him that a week at Léonœux in her society would be like a breath of pure, sweet evening wind after a day of storm and heat, and he began to cast about for an excuse to leave Lizard Town and the fair and frail Marquise Villano.

He found it rather difficult to do.

She kept close and jealous watch over the lover whom she adored, and yet hardly trusted, and combated with almost angry heat any suggestion that he should go away and leave her.

At last he hit on an expedient, and got his manager to send him an urgent telegram saying that his presence was required instantly in London.

The telegram came early in the morning, before the Marquise had left her room, and Trewavas having laid his plans well, and being ready to depart, escaped while yet the unhappy woman who loved him, "not wisely, but too well," slumbered.

He left a letter for her and the telegram, and protested that he was overwhelmed with grief at leaving her, and that the memory of the dear, dear hours spent in her society would be a living memory and gladness to him for ever, and wrote vaguely about meeting again in the future under happier circumstances.

This was the only crumb of comfort the wretched, guilty woman had whereon to feed her famishing heart. They might meet again in the future, but when, where, how, she did not know, and it seemed to her he did not care.

He had wrought her woe, he had taught her to love, and he had left her without a farewell interview, and her mind misgave her as to his fidelity. She could never have let him in such a fashion. She would have thought of him and his pain first, and of herself afterwards. Then she was a woman, and unselfish, while he was a man, and

selfish to the core, true to the fetish he had worshipped since he was ten years old, and would worship till the last day of his life—self.

His absence showed her how necessary he was to her happiness, how incomplete life would be without him, and she raged against her fate.

"My Heaven! What have I done!" she cried, in the first horror and dismay of this cruel desertion. "How have I wrecked my life, my future, my prospects? I, a wife! a wife, with a most loving, devoted husband, to have so far forgotten my duty, my vows! Oh, how will it end? How can it end? Only in one way—misery!"

"There is always death," she added, drearily, "that last refuge of the sad at heart and hopeless."

"Am I hopeless, though? Can this man, who is the object of my heart's idolatry, for whom I have lost all, desert me thus cruelly? No, no," she cried, vehemently, twisting her hands in the soft, dark masses of her hair, that rippled like a veil over her white shoulders nearly down to her feet. "I will not believe it. He has acted thus to try me. I will believe in him to the last. Belief is life. If I doubt him I must die, or," she added, slowly, dropping the heavy tress of hair that he had kissed so often passionately, "he must."

And her face grew strangely set and pale as she toyed with a silver mounted Venetian dagger.

A mere toy, and yet such a deadly, murderous toy, with its flashing, narrow, blue steel blade, and her little, long fingers closed on the handle fiercely, as though she was going to drive it up to the hilt in the breast of some sworn foe and traitor.

"I will believe," she murmured, with a tired sigh, her hand relaxing, her face growing mobile and life-like once more, "until—until I have actual proof of his falsity. I will write to him. He told me a letter addressed to the Paragon would always find him. I will trust him until I hear from his own lips, or see written by his own hand the confirmation of my fears."

#### CHAPTER V.

THE Marquise kept her word. She wrote to her lover a passionate, pleading, soul-stirring letter, and then waited as best she could for the answer, striving to appear, to fond husband and loving daughter, as though nothing was amiss, though the whole fabric of her life seemed to have crumbled into dust, and every hour seemed like a year of pain and torture.

A week dragged its slow length along, and then a letter came, hardly such as she hoped for, still better than none. She answered it with another passionate effusion, which breathed undying love in every line, and again he answered.

So it went on for two months. She wrote four or five times a week; he once in ten or twelve days. Still these meagre crumbs of comfort helped her to live her life, to subdue the terrible longing she felt to go up to London and join him.

She would have been there, breathing the same air as he breathed, in the same city with him, only the Marquis was ill, unable to face the long journey, and of course she could not leave.

Bound up as she was in the other man, she still had some sense of duty, and tended her husband with gentle patience.

She was content to wait to receive a few cool lines now and then from Robert Trewavas. In fact, she would have gone on like that to the last day of her life rather than have lost him altogether, rather than see him in another's arms.

However, the young actor was not of the

same mind, unfortunately for himself. Her passionate, imploring letters worried and bored him. Beside, he was beginning to think seriously of getting married, of securing the rich and beautiful prize around which so many moths buzzed, eager to supplant him if they got but half a chance. So he determined to put an end to his little *affaire de cœur* with the Marquise Villano, and let her know the true state of affairs, and his intention of ere long becoming a Benedict.

In the letter he penned he spared her one humiliation—he did not let her know that he had been engaged to Maud when they first met; and he spoke vaguely of poverty and necessity driving him into the marriage.

Still, though he strove to palliate the blow, it fell with crushing force.

Octavia was overwhelmed when she read the words that confirmed her worst fears, that showed her lover in his true colours—as coward, liar, and deserter!

"Ah, my love! my love!" she moaned, beating her breast, and tearing her soft hair with nervous, unconscious hands, "what have you done? what have you done? Sealed your own fate and mine! I cannot live without you! I cannot let you live another's husband! You shall be mine still! mine! mine! only mine!" and, getting up with a shrill laugh and shining, wild-looking eyes, she went over to the dressing-table, and taking the Venetian dagger from its case, slipped it into the bosom of her dress.

The blow at any time would have been terrible to her, now it was overwhelming; for only that morning the Marquis had died, quietly, peacefully, trusting and believing in the wife who had betrayed him.

Her love for Robert Trewavas was no longer a sin and a disgrace, a reproach to her womanhood, a stain on her honour. She was free: free to be wooed and won, free to marry.

But it was too late. The man who should have been at her side was lounging on the grass at Léonœux beside Maud Thornhill, whispering pretty speeches in her pink ears, and urging her to consent to a speedy marriage.

"I wish, dear, you would fix the end of this month?" he was saying, as he looked up into her pretty, girlish, innocent face, so different from that dark, passionate one he had gazed at while strolling in fair Kynance Cove.

"That is so soon," she objected, turning away her head, so that he could only see part of her neck, a shell-like ear, and a great knot of fair hair; still he could tell she was blushing charmingly.

"So soon!" he echoed. "Why we have been engaged over four months."

"That—is—a very—short engagement," she faltered.

"Happy's the wooing that's not long a-doing," he rejoined, sentimentally, taking one of her hands in his. "Don't you want to make me happy, Maud?"

"Yes, of course, Robert; only—"

"Only what?"

"I don't like leaving father."

"You need not do that, dear!" he hastened to assure her, for his plans for their future were hardly hers.

"No?" looking at him, interrogatory in her purple eyes.

"We—we could all live here together, if you like."

"Would you like it?" she queried in some astonishment and considerable disappointment, for she had dreamt of a tiny, rose-covered cottage at Richmond, or Hampstead, or Chiswick, from which he could easily get up to the theatre; where they would be all alone together, and where they could bill and coo like a brace of

turtle-doves, with no one to look on and laugh at the performance.

"I should like what would please you best," he replied, gallantly lifting up her hand to his lips, glancing around at the same time and thinking what a nice place it would be to ask his friends down to, and play the part of host, and squire of the parish.

"You are very kind," she said, a trifle coldly, for what young woman does not wish to think her lover wants her all to himself.

"That arrangement would get over the difficulty of leaving your father."

"Of course."

"Then if you agree to it, you won't mind fixing this month, will you dearest?" he urged, his arm stealing round her waist, and clinging to it tightly.

"No-o."

"Then I may speak to the squire to-night?"

"Yes," she agreed, and was surprised to find how little elated she was at the prospect of soon becoming his bride.

The fact was, Maud was a little too young to know her own heart, and while Trewavas was away in Cornwall, Glendenning improved the golden opportunity, and was such a delightful companion that Miss Thornhill began to look back with some regret on those happy days before she met Trewavas, when she and her cousin were good comrades, rode, hunted, valed, tennised, walked together, and were as happy as the day was long, like little boys and girls in the story-books. Only she hadn't known when she was well off, nor appreciated the honest, whole-hearted devotion offered her by Glendenning, but let her fancy be caught by "the blink o' a bonnie grey eye."

"That fellow's always here now," exclaimed Glendenning, angrily, as he came across the lawn with Lady Dorothy and Lockhart, and saw the lovers sitting side by side, talking earnestly and oblivious of every one else.

"Naturally," replied Lady Dorothy with a little matron's smile, "all will soon be his."

"That is anticipating a little," put in Lockhart, "the squire is alive and hearty!"

"And long may he continue so," ejaculated Cyril, with vehemence, "I should be sorry to see that hound master here."

"Still he bids fair to be so."

"True," groaned the unsuccessful lover, very dismally; "I wish there was an Act of Parliament which would enable people to break off unsuitable matches when their relatives are foolish enough to enter into them."

"So do I," snapped his aunt.

"Do you really?"

"Yes."

"Why, I thought you liked the fellow."

"Well, you see you are wrong. I don't like the fellow."

"I am glad to hear it."

"Humph! Why?"

"You will be on my side now?"

"I always have been on your side."

"Then why didn't you help me?"

"I did while I could. After she met him," nodding towards Trewavas, "it was no good. She's infatuated for the present."

"You think, then, it won't last?"

"Certainly not, if she has the misfortune to marry him. Marriage in her case will sweep away all illusions; she will see him as he really is, not as he appears now; in the guise of a tender and devoted lover."

"Poor child!" sighed Cyril.

"He'll break her heart," said her ladyship, sagely, and with strong conviction.

"Can't we do anything to save her?"

"I am afraid not. I have been hoping from week to week that something would happen to prevent it, only nothing does occur."

"The wedding day is not fixed yet, is it?"

"Not that I know of."

"May it be a long time off."

"Amen!" said Lady Dorothy, piously.

"I wonder why he doesn't urge her to fix it soon. He must be very sure of her."

"He is."

Just then, as though in answer to Glendenning's remark, Trewavas got up, and offering his arm to Maud, led her towards her aunt.

"Congratulate me, Lady Dorothy," he said, gaily. "Maud has fixed the day. We are to be married on the 3rd."

"Oh, Heaven, all is over!" groaned Cyril, feeling that he should like to strangle the handsome, self-satisfied man, who stood before him, smiling serenely.

A few days later Trewavas was going back from Léonceaux to his hotel, accompanied by Maud, who generally walked part of the way with her lover, leaving him only when they reached the boundary of her father's estate.

It was a glorious October day, almost like summer; the sky of a deep pure blue, flecked here and there with silver cloud-lets, the wind soft and balmy, the sun shining steadily, throwing a glorious glamour over earth and sea and sky.

The fields through which they passed trended along the coast, now sinking into miniature streams, now rising abruptly into hillocks; between them on the beach lay a rich alluvial tract of land, the grass soft and lush and emerald of hue, growing over the brow of the cliff; on the other side was a copse of beeches and firs, and the empty hulls of beechmast crunched under their feet as they strolled along, and the crisp brown leaves had drifted a foot deep about the great gnarled roots; far down in a hollow a herd of deer were resting; near a river, that bloomed purple under the sun's warming rays, and that wound like a ribbon amid the green pastures as it flowed on to reach the mighty ocean; away on its blue bosom sailed many a white-winged vessel; some distinct spars, masts, rigging, photographed distinctly against the clear sky, others like phantoms, barely discernible, as they melted into the blue ether of the horizon, that dim line where sea and sky met and merged into one vast whole.

"What a glorious afternoon," exclaimed Robert.

"Isn't it perfect?" agreed Maud.

"It is a pleasure to live on such a day," he sighed, lifting his hat and letting the soft wind ruffle the golden curls on his brow.

"Would it be a pleasure to die on such a day?" hissed a voice in his ear, and turning with a start he became conscious that a woman stood beside him—a tall woman in a long trailing black dress, and with a thick veil over her face that concealed her features.

She must have stolen out from the beech copse, as a moment before she had not been there, a black sombre blot on the bright sun-filled landscape.

"Who are you?" he asked, involuntarily taking a step backwards, for his heart misgave him; some premonition of his coming fate was on him, chilling the life-blood in his veins, turning him sick and cold with deadly fear.

"So you don't know me?" sneered the harsh, strained voice that through all its metallic ring seemed strangely familiar, unpleasantly so, in fact.

"No. I don't know you," he replied, slowly, looking at her, while Maud, with widely-opened eyes and parted lips, looked on in amazement, being able to make nothing of the scene that was to have such a horrible ghastly ending.

"And yet we were very good friends once, lovers even, *amico amo*."

"You make a mistake," he said, hoarsely.

"I make no mistake, coward and dastard!" she cried, furiously, tossing back her veil and disclosing the features of Octavia Viliano. "Ah, you know me now?"

"Yes."

His pale lips tremblingly formed the word, while his fascinated eyes remained riveted on the terribly pale, distorted face of the woman he had betrayed.

"You know for what I have come?"

"No."

"No? Won't you try and guess?" she asked, with a ghastly traversery of a smile, while one long, lithe hand crept towards her bosom.

"No. It is—nothing to me," he faltered.

"But it is much to me, Roberto. My husband is dead. Dead! Do you understand? I am free! You can repair the wrong you have done me."

"The wrong?" he muttered, feebly, his face turning a sickly yellow hue.

"Ay, the wrong. You can marry me now. Will you?"

"What is the meaning of this?" exclaimed Maud, at last finding her voice. "What—what—is this lady to you, Robert?"

"Nothing," he replied, boldly, desperation giving him courage. "She is some mad woman of whom I know nothing."

"Ah! Coward! Traitor!" cried the Marquise, frantically; "dare you pretend to forget?"

"There is nothing to forget," he retorted, coldly.

"You repudiate me and my claim on you?" she asked, more steadily, only her great eyes glowed like a tiger's, and her face was like that of a corpse.

"You are mad. I will have you locked up if you dare to molest me any longer."

"Then—die, *traditore*!" and with a scream like a wild-cat she drew the slender Venetian dagger from her bosom and, springing on him, stabbed him repeatedly in the breast and throat till he fell face downwards on the soft sward, tearing and clutching at it and shrieking in his agony, while the dark blood poured out from his wounds, forming a ghastly pool on the green turf, dyeing it with its significant stain.

Both women stood a full moment looking at this horrible sight of a strong man in his death agony. Then, with a blood-curdling laugh, the Marquise turned and fled, and Maud, dropping on her knees, took Trewavas's head in her lap and tried to staunch the life blood welling from his breast with her tiny cambric handkerchief.

But it was almost instantly saturated, and her hands and dress. She saw nothing but blood.

It stained the sky, it blurred the sun's steady ray, it floated on the waves, it streamed over the cliffs, it was everywhere, and with an awful sense of horror on her she looked at the dead man's livid face and dropping jaw, and shrieking loudly for help, fell forward on his body in a deathly faint.

It was several hours before Maud recovered consciousness.

Cyril Glendenning, who had gone out to look for her, found her, and gave the alarm; and she and the dead man were brought back to Léonceaux, and it was several weeks



before she recovered from the attacks of brain fever that supervened on the horror and shock of that terrible afternoon.

When reason once more resumed her sway it was evident that she was in a very delicate state of health, and extremely nervous. She could not bear the least allusion to her dead lover, or the tragedy that had cut short his successful career.

She did not know that the wretched Marquise had been caught and shut up in a madhouse, where, decked in white bridal finery, she bade everyone she came across to go and array themselves in gala attire and attend her wedding with Robert Trevas, the great tragedian of the age. She knew nothing of that. She never alluded in any way to what had occurred.

His death was terrible, so sudden and unexpected.

He had gone out to the Great Beyond unshriven and unshrined, unready to face his Maker, and with many a black sin on his soul. Yet what worried her most was the thought of his unfaithfulness.

She had loved him so dearly. He had the first, best, purest love of her young heart, and he was utterly unworthy of it.

It made her doubt all mankind. She seemed incapable of believing in the truth and fidelity of any man, and when, about a year later, Cyril Glendenning pressed her to become his wife, she gently, yet firmly refused him, filling his heart with grief and dismay, for he had never dreamt the dead would stand in his way, though the living did.

"What shall I do?" he asked Lady Dorothy, despondingly.

"Wait," she replied, oracularly.

"But—I have waited," he rejoined, impatiently.

"A year!" said his aunt, contemptuously.

"Well? A year has been a long time to me."

"Possibly. You are not a woman."

"No, I'm not. But what do you mean?"

"I mean that a woman does not forget in a year."

"Some forget in less than that time."

"A husband, possibly, not a lover."

"He was faithless."

"What of that?"

"I should think it ought to be a great deal to a girl of Maid's temperament."

"If he lived no doubt it would be. Death has purged away all that was bad of him in her idea."

"I see. And is my whole life to be ruined for a mere sentimental fad?" he asked, gloomily.

"Not unless you wish it to be ruined."

"Of course I don't."

"Then have patience."

"It is all very well for you to talk, aunt. How can I have patience?"

"Do you want to lose her altogether?"

"Need you ask? You know my dearest wish is to win her."

"Then don't be foolish. Wait, wait, wait!"

"I may wait for nothing."

"You will wait for a wife."

"You seem very certain."

"I am. I know her temperament thoroughly. She thinks it a sacred duty to mourn his worthless memory—at present."

"And how long will she mourn?"

"I can't tell you certainly. But—ask her again two years hence, and, unless I am mistaken, she won't refuse you then, Cyril."

"I hope you may prove right," he said, slowly, looking at the slender, black-robed figure pacing backwards and forwards on the lawn, with loosely-clasped hands and down-beat head; "and Heaven grant me patience to wait!"

[THE END.]

## UNSEEN FIRES.

BY EFFIE ADELAIDE ROWLANDS.

### SUMMARY OF PREVIOUS CHAPTERS.

Valentine Eyre is riding through a forest in Spain when his attention is arrested by the sight of the beautiful gipsy girl Zitella. Valentine ascertains that she is betrothed to Hermann, a member of the gipsy band, and he would spare her if possible from a loveless marriage. Valentine undertakes to adopt Zitella, and she is sent to England to be educated. Valentine's wife is reported dead, but in reality she still lives. Zitella's education being completed she determines to use the influence of Valentine's position and power to further her own ambitious ends. She promises to marry Valentine, and at the same time, under another name, becomes involved in a love affair with Churchill Penance. Valentine is summoned to his father's death bed, and then learns that he has no right to any name but his mother's, and the estates being bequeathed to his brother Hermann. Valentine and Churchill are now sworn friends, and the conclusion of the last No. found lines, otherwise Zitella, scheming, with Churchill's assistance to keep her whereabouts and identity a secret.

### CHAPTER XI.

**C**HURCHILL PENANCE went unwillingly away, and back into the dark house turned Zitella, for she it was who had assumed the name of Inez Valdez, her whilom maid, and successfully passed herself off as Pedro's daughter-in-law.

So successful had been Zitella's daring scheme that the purblind, avaricious old man only wondered that he had ever sent adrift so useful a person as this daughter-in-law, who had so many ways of making money.

Old Pedro had boasted himself of his own unscrupulousness and cunning many a day; but now he told himself that his exploits were as child's play compared to what Inez could do; and between them the two plucked many an unwary pigeon.

If Pedro had discovered the fraud which Zitella had practised on him it would not have made any difference now, for with her beauty and unscrupulous cleverness the girl was simply worth her weight in gold.

Zitella knew this, and a dozen times a day she congratulated herself on the idea of having passed herself off as Inez Valdez.

In coming to Pedro Valdez she had acted on an impulse; she hardly knew why. But before long she told herself it had been a wise course.

Old Pedro would be worth robbing when, like others he had served his purpose.

But, now, as Zitella turned into the dark house, it seemed to her that the fates were conspiring to overthrow her unscrupulous plans.

Hers was not a nervous or timid nature. She never imagined evil or met misfortune half way; but now her hands were trembling, her brow cold and damp with terror, her brain throbbing with the intelligence which Churchill Penance conveyed to her.

Valentine Eyre was in Rio San Voge;—in the town which was ringing with the fame she had acquired as a dancer.

Even in this Zitella had been attended with the most extraordinary good fortune. She had dropped into the place of a celebrated dancer who had suddenly died in Madrid.

Zitella had taken the girl's name on the stage, and as her skill in dancing was just as marvellous as that of her predecessor, it was only the theatrical company by whom she was engaged that ever knew the difference.

Like Isidora in face and form, only more refined, Zitella continued to draw even greater crowds to watch her performances.

Her fame had increased nightly, and also her wealth, for bouquets, shielded with diamonds, were flung at her feet, and the people of Madrid said Isidora grew more bewitching every hour.

The real Isidora had enjoyed the reputation of being as virtuous as she was lovely and clever; and Zitella was polite enough not to imperil the good name which was part of her success by any rash act.

So far from encouraging lovers, no matter how rich they might be, she wrapped herself up in a sphinx-like mystery, which made her more than ever an object of curiosity and all devouring admiration.

In Madrid, Zitella, or rather Isidora (for by that name the adventuress was best known), had never been identified with old Pedro Valdez. But when the season was over in the gay capital, the two intent on adding more and more to their gains, had determined to visit the country towns.

They came in the course of a successful tour to Rio San Voge, whither the dancer Isidora's fame had preceded her. But here it suddenly seemed to Zitella as if her splendid luck was about to fail her at last.

That morning she had in the marketplace narrowly escaped falling a victim to the passionate vengeance of Hermann, her gipsy lover.

Now she heard that Valentine Eyre was in the town, and of the two whom she had wronged she feared him most.

She knew something of what love turned to hate is capable. She had no hope of being able to blind Valentine with falsehoods did he cross her path now; and her heart sickened within her as she thought that, in his just anger, he might have her arrested for the robberies which she had committed on Lady Fitzroy.

For the discovery of her imposition about the Czarvas title she had not a thought or a fear. She did not think such a fraud would be punishable by law.

Zitella had but one thought now—to leave Rio San Voge at once.

By her words to Churchill Penance she had greatly lessened the danger of discovery; but she must not remain any longer in the same town which sheltered the man she had so deeply wronged. Neither must she appear in public to-night; it would be too great a risk.

She had just come from her rehearsal at the theatre, (the story told to Churchill about the pupils, was of course, a falsehood;) but she would go there at once, see the manager, and make some good excuse for her non-appearance that night.

She was afraid to absent herself without leave or some explanation, for the prizes which she drew as Isidora were not to be lightly lost.

"I have made one hopeless mistake in my life; I do not want to make another; said Zitella to herself, thinking of her treatment of Hugo Brand, who, if she had waited a little while, would have been such a brilliant prize.

It was bitter to this clever, unscrupulous woman to think that by a false move she should have lost for ever the chance of brilliant rank and wealth.

Having shrouded her face from all fear of recognition Zitella set off to the theatre; but, to her great vexation, she found the manager obdurate. He would make no allowances, listen to no excuses. She must appear in public that night, or leave the theatre altogether.

For the first time Zitella encountered a will stronger than her own. She found, too, that in taking Isidora's name and fame she had taken some secret burden of guilt which gave the manager a power over her that she could not withstand.

She did not know what the secret was,

for his threats were vague; but she saw that, whatever the danger to herself, she must appear in the theatre to-night.

When she had thought it over she preferred to run the risk of meeting Valentine Eyre than offend the manager, who had, it seemed, the power to ruin her career by a word.

"After all," she said to herself, "except in the case of Hugo, my luck has never failed me yet. I will trust to it once more!"

Valentine Eyre waited breakfast for a full hour, and then, finding that Churchill did not come, he ordered some coffee to be made, after which, feeling rather angry with his friend, he went out for a solitary stroll in the environs of Rio San Voge, where during the course of the day his wanderings brought him to a forest, the features of which brought back, with painful distinctness, the memory of his first meeting with Zitella; and from thinking of the past there seemed to spring up in his mind a strong prevision that the hour of his vengeance was drawing near.

Returning to his abode about sunset, Valentine learned from Martin, his valet, that during his absence Churchill Penance had been in and gone out again, leaving word that he would dine at the Casino, and go afterwards to a play in which a celebrated dancing-girl from Madrid had been advertised to appear between the acts.

Valentine Eyre received the message with some impatience and an unaccountable doubt of its truth, though there was no reason why his friend should not go to the play did he feel inclined to do so. Still, Valentine felt that this was an excuse; and, with an affectation of carelessness, he inquired of the man if Churchill Penance had made any mention of the pocket-book whose loss had so disturbed him in the morning.

"No, sir," replied the valet, promptly. "Mr. Penance didn't make mention of no book, sir; but he did say as 'ow he 'oped you would not put yourself out for him on any account, and he didn't think as 'ow the play would be much, but he'd come away when he had had enough of it."

"I think I will go to the play too," said Valentine to himself when the valet had withdrawn, "and, by Jove! it would not be a bad idea to hunt Master Churchill up at this place where he is going to dine. I like the boy, and am resolved to keep him out of trouble if I can."

But though Valentine Eyre carried out his programme, no Churchill Penance did he find. He dined by himself, and then adjourned to the theatre to hear on all sides murmurs of the dancing girl from Madrid, whose fame had preceded her to Rio San Voge.

The house was well-nigh full as Valentine entered; but though many a lustrous dark eye met his glance, there was no sign of Churchill Penance. He felt a little hurt and angry in the suspicion that his friend had treated him with want of confidence; but after a few moments of hesitation, he decided to wait at least for the first part of the performance, and so he dropped into his seat, prepared to look on himself as a martyr to friendship.

The curtain went up, revealing an indifferently appointed stage, and the famous dancing girl, who was greeted with a perfect thunder of applause, which brought a contemptuous smile to the lips of Valentine Eyre, who was too indifferent to look at the object of this enthusiasm.

The moment the curtain gave tokens of rising he had leaned back in his seat and actually closed his eyes, in which position he remained while burst after burst of

applause broke forth around him, until at length he heard a voice exclaim beside him in Spanish,—

"Great Heaven; what dancing, and how lovely she is! Such eyes, such hair, such grace!"

Then, half in contempt, half-curious, to see if these eponyms were deserved, Valentine opened his eyes and looked towards the stage to see there Zitella, his false love!

He sprang out of his seat, and there broke from his lips a gasping cry of rage and pain, which was, however, utterly lost in the fresh plaudits which some indescribably graceful turn of Zitella's elicited from the excited audience; and so Valentine Eyre sank back in his seat, feeling for a while stricken and stunned in the shock of the moment for which he had waited and thirsted so long.

Zitella did not see him, or bold, hardened as she was she could not have danced on. Had her glance lighted on that of Valentine Eyre and seen the deadly purpose which gleamed from his eyes she must have been stricken down; but, though disturbed by anxious thoughts of him, she was utterly unconscious of his presence, and every movement of her exquisite form drew louder and yet louder acclamations from every part of the house, until it seemed as if the roof would be rent in twain.

At last the curtain fell, and then little jets of flame shot up all over the house, but they fell on one empty seat in the stalls; and as Zitella passed before the footlights and gathered up the jewelled bouquets which were flung to her, her wronged, discarded lover was waiting outside in the shadow of the portico, wrapped in a long dark cloak, and lingering with nervous hands the hilt of the dagger which he had carried with him ever since the day on which he found himself betrayed; and the desire for revenge working on his fiery Spanish blood became a mania, until he believed that Zitella's life would be but a small price for her falseness, and that in taking it he was committing a just and virtuous deed.

He had long to wait, but the delay did not cool his blood, nor did he grudge the time, though the minutes went so slowly by, for now he was sure of his revenge, and the anticipation was not the least part of its sweetness.

At length, what he had been waiting for arrived, for Zitella, cloaked and hooded, appeared in the portico, and Valentine, as he peered out of his dark corner, heard her say in Spanish to those who surrounded her footsteps,—

"Thank you, I require no assistance. I prefer to find my own way home."

Then her train of worshippers fell back, and drawing her cloak closely round her slender figure Zitella left the building alone.

With swift, silent footsteps she passed from that street into another and a darker, and from the way in which she walked, or rather fled along, it would seem that she feared pursuit, but she never once turned to look until Valentine was close upon her with the dagger in his hand, and then faltering in his purpose, his voice broke forth in this horrified cry,—

"Great Heaven! what is this thing I would do!"

The spectre of his deed had risen before him and stayed his hand, and when Zitella turned to look at him he was trembling like a coward, while great drops of sweat gathered on his brow.

A moment their eyes met, and in her guilty terror Zitella almost gave herself up for lost. She looked round, but saw no aid, and her limbs seemed stricken powerless;

then her glance travelled back to the gleaming blade in Valentine's hand, and from that to his eyes, lurid now with fire of fierce passion, and she saw that though he had faltered for a moment she must expect no mercy at his hands.

But her courage did not altogether forsake her, and though her limbs and tongue seemed powerless, her brain was as keen as ever; and knowing that she must have time to think she feigned a swoon and sank to the pavement at the feet of the man she had cheated and betrayed, but who would not, as her woman's instinct told her, either hurt or abandon her in this plight.

Valentine bent over the prostrate form and looked into the face, which was like veined marble. He told himself that she had slain his love, and forfeited all claim to mercy; that he hated and loathed her, and that it would be a just deed were he to plunge the dagger in her heart; but this did not lessen her beauty or her power over him. And still he lingered, bending over her proclaiming his misery, and uttering aloud the wild hope that there might have been some mistake, until at length he raised Zitella, and bore her a few paces in his arms, until he turned into a sort of blind alley, in which there was barely light enough to show him when he looked close that Zitella had opened her eyes.

"Valentine, oh, my love!" she murmured. Then the tender tones changed to a cry of anger and pain, and frantically the girl struggled in his tightening arms, calling on Heaven and the Holy Virgin to let her free from this false traitor who had wrecked her life, and would now follow her with persecutions.

"Traitor!" echoed Valentine, with angry bitterness. "It is I who have been betrayed!" But his arms tightened more and more firmly until, as if through sheer exhaustion, her futile struggles ceased.

"Zitella," he asked at length, "why did you play me false? If you have any truth in you, give me the true reason now."

The girl replied with a scornful laugh, and Valentine felt beneath her arm the hard beating of her heart, and heard her quick panting breath. Then, as the echoes of her laughter died away, she exclaimed angrily,—

"How dare you question me? How dare you speak of truth!—you, who are one mass of falsehood, who deceived me with lies from the beginning?"

The hot blood mounted up into Valentine's cheek, and his pulses throbbed with mingled relief and terror; but he kept silence while Zitella thought what false charge she could bring against him that would be a sufficient excuse for her treachery. But Valentine himself put the words into her mouth.

"Zitella," he said, "some meddling person told you of my wife. But what wrong was there to you? I never loved her as I loved you; but it was not my fault that she was not happy; it was not my fault that she died alone, and unattended by me, her husband, who only arrived in time to stand above her grave."

From these words Zitella inferred that Valentine knew nothing of her treachery to Lady Fitzroy, and that, at least as far as he was concerned, her fraud about her name and birth was still a secret. His mind, she could plainly see was wholly occupied with thoughts of his love for her, and her falsehood towards himself, and for that she was desperately resolved she would make some satisfactory explanation. That this man was still as wildly infatuated with her as ever she had no longer a doubt. It would be easy to bring him back to her feet and make him the slave of her will once more; but this she had no desire to



do. Her only wish was to avert his anger, and get away scot free once and for ever.

She was silent for a moment, then she suddenly exclaimed, in hard, scolding tones,—

"Your wife was not in that grave, Valentine Eyre!"

"Good Heaven, what do you mean?"

Zitella averted her face for a few moments, then went on, with evident horror in her tones,—

"I mean this. That your wretched wife, weary of your hatred and cruelty, and unable to die, sought the only means of escape which was open to her. She fled from your house, leaving behind her those who were bribed by word and deed to make all appear as if she were dead and buried."

A terrible silence followed these words; at length Valentine broke from the trance of horror which seemed to bind him, and exclaimed aloud,—

"Great Heaven, I cannot believe this. It cannot be true!"

"It is true," replied Zitella, calmly, for she felt now that, whatever the next move might be, the game was all in her own hands.

"Your proof!" asked Valentine, hoarsely. "Give me your proof?"

"I have no proof," replied Zitella, "beyond my mere word. But what more can you want? Do you think," she said bitterly, "that I would have given you up, and shattered all my life's happiness for less than this?" Here she began to speak in a thick hurried way, as if sobs she could not control were rising in her throat. She dwelt on the anguish and shame, the shock which was hers, when Mrs. Eyre revealed herself to her suddenly one night at Lady Fitzroy's house in London. She was alone when the cruel blow had fallen on her, for her hostess and Blanche Hastings had gone to a party. "I would not go in your absence," said Zitella, in a way that wrung a cry and a groan from her listener's heart. "I was sitting alone," she continued, "when they told me a person was waiting who would see me. Then Mrs. Eyre came in, and, when she had left me, there was only room in my crushed heart for one thought, and that was flight. To get back to my native land, away from all who had ever known me, was my desire. Before Lady Fitzroy and Blanche had returned I had made my plans, and was already on my way to Spain."

To all this Valentine listened with feelings which no words can describe. He had no suspicion of Zitella's truth. All his anger was removed from her and centred on the wife who had tricked and cheated him with such cruel, such incomprehensible falsehood. He could not fathom the motives which had induced Celia to act in such a way; but, in these moments of grief and passion, he had not the smallest doubt that she had really revealed herself to Zitella.

"And she lives still?" he asked at last, in cold, dreary, hopeless tones.

A long silence followed this question. Zitella could not make up her mind what answer to make. Should she tell Valentine his wife was dead, he would expect her to prove her love for him by forgiving him, and becoming Mrs. Eyre.

"If I refuse to do this," thought Zitella to herself, "he will still linger near me and cripple my actions, and there will be a hundred things to awaken his suspicions then. Though he is rich I almost hate him, and he would not be worth the trouble I should have from his fierce jealousy. No! If I have to give up all hope of identifying myself as the lawful wife of him whom I married as Hugo Brand, I think that

foolish young Englishman, who since this morning has been ready to die for me, would be a far better prize."

Zitella had closed her eyes, feigning a return of her swoon, as these swift thoughts passed through her mind; but when Valentine spoke again, imploring her for Heaven's sake, to answer his question, she raised her head, saying, in a tone that seemed fraught with misery,—

"Yes, Heaven help us both, my poor Valentine! Your wife still lives to be an insuperable barrier between us!"

"She shall not be. I swear she shall not!" cried Valentine.

His voice was harsh and broken with frenzy; and clasping Zitella closer in his arms, he covered her face with frantic kisses, between which he repeated again and again the assurance that nothing in life or death should come between them.

Zitella lay still and motionless, with closed eyes, as if she was dead to all feeling. This passionate outpouring of her lover's heart gratified her cruel lust for homage.

It was a triumph that she could not forego; but by-and-by she remembered that it was dangerous, and rousing herself she exclaimed with a splendid affectation of reproach and disdain,—

"And you are the man I have loved and trusted—you, who have done me and another a most bitter wrong, would now shrink from the only atonement you can make."

"Zitella. I call Heaven to witness, I did you no wilful wrong. Oh, Heaven; you love me!"

Zitella raised her hand entreatingly.

"Hush!" she said, in solemn tones. "Do not invoke Heaven's vengeance or tempt me to forget that you have a wife, and that I am a Czarras."

"Oh, good heavens!" gasped Valentine; and then he bowed his head, and his whole frame seemed shaken with the fierce, dry sobs which broke from him. Then his hands unclasped themselves, and the dagger, which he had been holding all this time, dropped to the pavement with a sound that made Zitella realize more clearly the risk she had run; and then, starting and shivering, she bade Valentine let her go.

"By Heaven I will not!" cried Valentine. "I have no love but you—no wife! Celia has wronged and deceived me shamefully. She deserves no consideration at my hands."

And he proceeded to pour forth for Zitella a passionate recital of his marriage with Celia De Nunaz, and its unhappy results.

The girl heard him to the end, and then said in sorrowful, gentle tones,—

"I do not wish to be unkind; and, alas! I destroy my own happiness; but in all this I see that you, and you only, have been to blame. Your wife, though mistaken in some of her actions, has been an angel of goodness, and Heaven will surely punish you if you do not make her and your children all possible reparation."

"What shall I do!" asked Valentine, in sullen misery; and eagerly Zitella replied,—

"Ah! now you are true to yourself, and my high noble ideal! But what can you do? Only this, return to England, and seek out your poor, unhappy wife. Do not rest until you have found her, and then all will be well, for a true woman's forgiveness is equal to her love."

"I will not return to England!" replied Valentine, passionately. "Zitella, oh, my love—my love! You cannot be so cruel, so—"

"Hush!" interrupted the girl, and there was the purity of an angel in her voice and features, "not another word. Remember,

that to speak to me of love is deadly sin!"

Valentine continued to plead and argue, but all to no purpose; then he suddenly said that it was impossible that he could return to England. And forthwith he began to narrate the story told on his father's deathbed, and to explain that the finding of his brother Hermann was a charge he could not neglect.

Zitella listened, and her heart beat wildly, because the web of destiny seemed thickening so strongly around her; for she felt quite sure that this Hermann was the gipsy to whom she had been betrothed in her childhood, and who was at this moment thirsting for vengeance on her.

That morning Hermann had crossed her path, and his anger had only been averted by the brave intervention of Churchill Penance. By herself she had nothing serious to fear from Hermann, for she could always deceive and disarm him with some well-concocted lie of having been carried off against her will by Valentine Eyre, but should the two men meet she was undone. She resolved, however, that if she could help it they should not meet.

She shuddered, resolving that the morning light should find her fled from Rio San Voge. And then she said aloud that she could give him a clue to the discovery of Hermann, of whom she had heard not long ago from the extreme north of Spain; but she advised Valentine to abandon the search, for Hermann was a wild, bad man, who would not be grateful for kindness.

"I must do him justice," replied Valentine. "But, oh! Zitella, let us not speak of him, but of ourselves. When am I to see you again?"

"Never after to-night!" said Zitella. "Oh, Valentine, how can you hope it? Do not make it harder for me," and she sighed piteously. "My love I cannot help, but I can remember that I am a Czarras, and if you care for me you will prove it by leaving this place to-morrow."

"And you, Zitella, how can I bear to think of you, as I saw you to-night? Oh! my dear love I cannot. You must promise me that you will dance no more in public."

"Then I should starve," replied the girl, bitterly, "and not only I but the poor old man whom I support. Ah! you must not elasp me in that jealous frenzy, Valentine, for poor old *pere* is almost ninety; and is happy in the belief that I am his daughter, whom I resemble closely. The poor soul and I were friends, and when she died her poor, dotting old father would have been desolate if I had not taken care of him."

"Heaven bless you, darling!" said Valentine, brokenly, "but this dancing must end from to-night. I will provide for you and the old man."

"Oh! Valentine, you forget!" sobbed Zitella. "Oh! if you really respect me let me go now. Do not seek to find out my dwelling; it would be too great a temptation, and there is less danger for me from the dark streets than from your society."

"I swear," said Valentine, "that if you will confide to me your address I will do no more than communicate with you through my lawyer!"

And so after a few minutes' hesitation, Zitella furnished her lover with the name and number of a street which were both fictitious, and a moment later she had slipped from his arms, and was gliding swiftly through the dark deserted streets.

She had escaped for this once, but the escape was narrow, and she did not feel at all secure.

## CHAPTER XII.

VALENTINE stood still in the dark narrow alley listening to the last sound of Zitella's



VALENTINE EYRE FELL FORWARD, PIERCED IN THE DARKNESS WITH HIS OWN DAGGER, AND BY THE HAND OF HERMANN.  
(Illustrating the splendid romance *UNSEEN FIRES*.)

vanishing footsteps. His impulse had been and was still to follow her from a distance and see her enter her home; but the remembrance of her parting words restrained him, for they had been a wild plea that he would prove his love and his truth by letting her go in peace.

"You make it harder than death for me," Zitella had whispered, and Valentine could not now be disloyal to the promise which he had made, because he loved Zitella ten thousand times more for the purity and womanly pride, in which he believed with all his heart.

He thought he heard a sound behind him as he stood there of a slow, cautious movement, and looked anxiously round, but saw nothing. Then, instead of quitting this strange refuge, he stood still, and once more plunged into thoughts of Zitella until feeling became too much for him and he exclaimed aloud,—

"My darling! My pearl beyond price or compare, who would ask to give you up? Oh my love! it is too—"

Suddenly the passionate, despairing tones changed to a hoarse, strangled cry of physical pain.

"Oh! Heaven!"

The words ended in a horrible gurgling sound, as Valentine Eyre fell forward, pierced in the darkness with his own dagger, and by the hand of Hermann, who had tracked both Zitella and Valentine from the door of the theatre.

"He is my brother; but he has robbed me and deserves his fate," said the gipsy to himself, as the heavy fall was succeeded by silence, and fearing nothing he bent down and pressed his hand over the heart of his victim to see if life was yet extinct.

When a few faint throbs responded to the

touch of his fingers Hermann seemed puzzled to know what to do; and it was not brotherly feeling alone which restrained him from plunging the dagger a second time in the body of his victim.

"He has robbed me of my love!" he muttered, savagely; "but if I spare his life I may have a better revenge," and then rising he went a few cautious steps, feeling with his hand along the wall until he came to a window.

Here Hermann knocked significantly three times, and was answered by the opening of the window, and a voice, which asked some questions in a few hurried whispers. After which a short colloquy ensued, which ended in the opening of the door, and the appearance in the street of two persons, who assisted Hermann to carry the wounded man indoors.

"It is lucky that it happened here," remarked one of them, as they bore the body through a secret trapdoor and down a long flight of steps into an underground room which no ray of natural light ever pierced.

This house was in the possession of a gang of desperados, who were thieves on shore and smugglers on the sea, and Hermann knew that in their hands Valentine Eyre was safe; for if he lived this room would be a prison for him, and if he died there was a subterranean passage by which his body could be removed and flung into the sea.

One of the gang, who was something of a surgeon, attended to Valentine, and having rifled his pockets and divided between them the contents, with his watch and jewellery, the villains left their unconscious victim, and went upstairs to pass the night in drinking and card-playing.

The evening which ended so tragically for

Valentine Eyre was full of disappointments for Churchill Penance.

As the reward of his devotion in the morning he had looked forward to an evening in the society of the beautiful Inez; and with his heart rushing before him he had gone to the house of the old Spaniard, who told him, grumblingly, that his daughter had got a headache, and gone to bed.

"Women are all the same," muttered the old man. "Inez does not care for my company and so she leaves me alone; for, of course," he added, plaintively, "I can't expect that you will stay and cheer me up a bit."

## A Spirited and Graphic Story.

The admirers of that delightful story, "Phillipa's Father," which recently appeared in our columns will have the opportunity next week of reading another of this author's spirited romances entitled

**Princess Hildegarde.**





"YES, SIR. IT WAS THAT TELEGRAM MADE THEM RESOLVE TO GO," SAID THE SERVANT TO PAUL BERESFORD.  
(Illustrating the brilliant story IVY'S PERIL.)

"I will spend an hour or two with you," replied Churchill, who guessed that Inez was out, and not lying down upstairs, as her father-in-law believed.

"But my beautiful darling," thought the young man, fondly, "will not be allowed to work when once I have won her love!" and then, for the sake of Inez, Churchill Penance sat down and began to play cards with old Pedro Valdez, whom he instinctively disliked and mistrusted.

He played on and on in the hope that the object of his thoughts would return and reward him with a whispered good-night and a hand clasp in the passage; and when Pedro had won all his money the young man cheerfully staked and lost his rings and watch, which pointed to the hour of midnight before he rose up and tore himself away.

The wine which the young man had drunk during the evening had mounted to his brain and left him capable but of these thoughts—that life would not be worth living without Inez, and that to-morrow he should ask her to be his wife, and so set her free from her miserable existence.

His head was still clear enough to enable him to see that Pedro Valdez would not be a desirable connection, but he resolved to provide the old man with such comforts that he would never wish to leave his native land. And so thinking Churchill Penance reached his abode, from which, to his surprise, he found Valentine Eyre absent; but on this account the young man was not much troubled, for Inez's hints had estranged him so far from his friend that he resolved they two should part company as soon as possible.

However, when on rising the following morning Churchill learned from his friend's

valet that his master was still absent the young man began to feel rather puzzled and anxious; but so selfish is love that by the time breakfast was over his thoughts had once more flown to Inez, and thinking every moment that kept him apart from her an hour he set out to the house of Pedro Valdez.

On entering Churchill Penance found the old man alone, and in a state of rage and misery beyond all description. He tore his long grey hair and beat his hands on his breast, weeping and raving like a maniac; then showing Churchill rifled chests and coffers he told the young man an incoherent tale of how his daughter-in-law had come in on him at a late hour on the previous night, and finding him engaged in counting his money, had given him some wine which must have contained a heavy drug, for immediately on drinking it he had fallen asleep and had not wakened until morning, when he found that his daughter-in-law had robbed him of all he possessed.

The old man's tale, though wild and incoherent, had all the appearance of truth, but in spite of his tears and despairing gestures Churchill refused to believe him.

Inez's beautiful face, her innocence, her gentle words, rose up before the young man's memory, and forbade him to believe that she could be guilty of such a wicked and unscrupulous act as that which had been laid to her charge; and though the appearance of the old Spaniard's money-chests bore witness to the fact that some thief had been there, Churchill thought that the old man's losses had maddened him, and so he must not be blamed for suspecting the first person who came into his head; but when he spoke of this Pedro

stamped on the floor and shrieked with rage.

"I tell you it was my daughter-in-law who robbed me!" he cried. "Oh, my money! my money!" and he flung himself down on the empty chest, shrieking with renewed violence. "My daughter-in-law robbed me, my fiend of a daughter-in-law!"

"Peace, old man. She who robbed you was not your daughter-in-law," broke in a sudden strange voice from the doorway of the room, and, turning, Churchill beheld the gipsy man from whom he had rescued Inez on the previous day; but now that the man no longer wore his native costume but a suit of English make and fashion, Churchill was struck by the extraordinary likeness which this new-comer bore to Valentine Eyre, for in feature, height, and complexion, it seemed that the two men were exactly the same. Then springing towards Hermann, Churchill exclaimed, triumphantly,—

"I knew it was not Inez. But now forget that you owe me any grudge, on account of yesterday, and say who committed this foul act, and you will be well rewarded?"

He spoke in English; but Hermann, however, he had attained his knowledge, was familiar with the language, for he scowled darkly as he replied,—

"I do not mean to forget the grudge I owe you; but I owe her a greater one, and I tell you now that it was she who robbed this old man, whose daughter-in-law she pretends to be."

Churchill Penance heard thus far, then sprang forward, his fists clenched, his eyes blazing with anger, that made him ready to crush the life out of him who had dared to utter falsehoods against his love.

"Scoundrel!" he hissed forth, "of whom do you dare to speak?"

But Herman was nothing daunted by the young man's fury, and replied with sullen calm,—

"I defy you to call me a scoundrel again! I have spoken nothing but the truth of Zitella, who is no more Inez Valdez than you are. This old man's daughter-in-law is a maid in England, and Zitella has taken her place here in her father-in-law's home."

"How do you know all this?" asked Churchill, still incredulous, and ready to fight to the death for the honour of her he loved.

"I know it," replied Hermann, readily, "because I have dogged Zitella's footsteps. She was a gipsy and betrothed to me, but she sold me for an Englishman called Valentine Eyre, and it was with him that she left this town last night, having robbed that old man," and Hermann concluded his speech by pointing to the crouching form of the miserable old man, who had now entirely succumbed to his woes, and, huddled up on the floor, was sobbing like a child for the loss of his beloved money.

But Churchill had no pity now for this sordid grief; his nature seemed withered; and he was ready to curse everyone and everything. So with a bitter laugh and a few scornful words to the miserable old man he turned and left the house, vowing in his heart to be revenged on the girl who had sold him, and on the false friend whose life he had once saved.

In this bitter mood the young man returned to his lodgings, and when he heard that Valentine Eyre was still absent, he needed no further proof of his treachery. Strange to say, it never entered into his head that in carrying off the girl whom he had known and loved before Valentine Eyre had done his friend no wrong, for calm thought was not much in Churchill's line. He only knew that yesterday he had fallen madly in love with the most beautiful woman he had ever seen, and to-day he had lost her. He looked on Valentine Eyre as the cause of his loss, and aloud, in the presence of his friend's servant, he swore to take revenge. But the man was stout in the defence of his master, and replied, gravely,—

"I don't believe, sir, from what I know of the past that my master would go away like this with Miss Czarvas. It's more likely, after the shameless trick she played him when they were going to be married, that he'd refuse to have anything to say to her. It's my belief that there's been foul play somewhere, and I don't go back to England until I have found my master."

But here Churchill refused to listen to any further mention of Valentine Eyre, of whom he reiterated his opinion in the very strongest language possible; and within the next few hours he had taken his departure from the town of Rio San Vopez never to enter it again.

(To be continued next week.)

(This story commenced in No. 1870. Back Nos. can be obtained through any newsagent.)

Our next Serial Story shortly to be commenced will be entitled

## A GOLDEN DESTINY.

By the author of "Redeemed by Fate," "The Mistress of Lynwood," &c., &c.

## IVY'S PERIL.

### SUMMARY OF PREVIOUS CHAPTERS.

The mother of Ivy Carew has met her death under very suspicious circumstances many years before the story begins, and Ivy, who is living with her guardian, Sir John Fortescue, at Starham, is dimly conscious that a mystery surrounds her life. Meadow View, in which Ivy was born, has recently been let to George White, and his sister, who take more than ordinary interest in their neighbours. Sir John Fortescue and the millionaire are fast friends, and it is evident that the Baronet does not see to what a pass matters are drifting. Meanwhile Paul Beresford has declared his love for Ivy and Lady Fortescue is anxious to see them married. The news of their engagement comes as a surprise to Mr. White and his sister, but they do not openly show their uneasiness. Sir John is prevailed upon to delay the marriage for six months and to undertake a trip to Australia, and his wife accompanies him, and during the voyage they become very friendly with a passenger who eventually proves of great service to them. Paul and Ivy are separated, Mrs. Austin taking charge of Ivy, whose letters to Paul, at first warm and loving, after a time grow quite cold and formal. The White's depart from London suddenly with Ivy. News reaches Paul that his sweetheart is suffering, and in his search for the rascal White, he opportunely meets Dr. Ward who attended Ivy's mother in her last illness. Sir John Fortescue is pursuing his search in Australia for the heir to the estate and has no idea of the crisis impending at home.

### CHAPTER X.

HERE was breathless silence when Paul Beresford had finished speaking. John Milton looked at his son-in-law, as though trying to read his opinion in his face, but Marcus Ward was not one to betray his feelings—he looked perfectly inscrutable. At last the older man could keep silence no longer; he burst forth—

"Mark, don't you hear what Mr. Beresford says? Can't you answer him?"

Dr. Ward started. He seemed brought back by these simple, homely words to the fact that he was not alone. He rose and wrung Paul Beresford's hand.

"I beg your pardon," he said, speaking evidently with strong emotion; but your question seemed to carry me back to the past. I was living over again the weeks when I attended Mrs. Gresham almost daily, and I was reproaching myself once more—as indeed I have done fifty times since—that I did not suspect the mischief that was going on. Mr. Beresford, I promised my poor patient if ever it was in my power I would befriend her child; you may call upon my assistance at any time and in any way. Fifteen years ago I was a young man, with but little experience. To start the idea of poisoning would have seemed to me a cruel doubt of the husband, who seemed so anxious for his wife's safety. Any stray thoughts as to Mrs. Gresham's malady I dismissed as mere wild fancies. But, mark you, I have never forgotten a single symptom of her case. I am as certain now that she died by repeated small doses of slow poison as I am that you may trust me to do my best for her child."

Mr. Milton looked at his son-in-law admiringly; his love for Mark was something wonderful. Paul could see he was longing for an excuse to tell him he had done quite right. Mr. Beresford had a keenly sensitive nature, and he could understand the burden of remorse which years of success had never lifted from the doctor's shoulders.

"I should like to tell you one thing, Dr. Ward," he said frankly; "If Mrs. Gresham were indeed Ivy's mother, I know enough of her story to be sure death was most welcome to her. She would never have regretted that you did not discover the truth in time to save her life."

"I wish you would tell me her story," said Marcus Ward, simply. "I confess it has often puzzled me."

"She married Captain Carew without love—remember I have only gathered this

from short remarks which have dropped occasionally from the Fortescues and Mr. Ainslie; but loving Ivy as I do I was so interested in her mother I put two and two together till I think I am pretty correct. She married, as I said, without love; and a year later she went abroad with her husband. The story of his death is a mystery, but I know poison was mentioned, and Mrs. Carew's name did not escape reflection. When Sir John Fortescue went to fetch her home—her and her child—he found she had fled from Rome, and within six weeks of Captain Carew's death married a handsome adventurer, who had been a great deal in her company ever since she went abroad."

"And that was Gresham?"

"I never heard his name. Then a kind of blank ensues; she was never spoken of at St. Arran's. It is rumoured Meadow View was broken into the very week of Captain Carew's death, and some valuables removed. Sir John would never prosecute, because he thought the thieves were really his sister-in-law's agents. I really know nothing of the next few years; there is no trace of Mrs. Carew's coming to Starham; Mr. Ainslie assured me once a woman dressed in something between the uniform of a hospital nurse and the garb of a Sister of Mercy visited him to make inquiries about the Fortescues. She even gave him Mrs. Carew's address, which turned out to be a fictitious one. When White and his sister first came to St. Arran's, the Vicar fancied Mrs. Austin was his mysterious visitor, but I persuaded him he was mistaken."

"I should say he was right."

"He had no proof in the world except that the Sister and the widow both possessed a crooked finger. He is a good man, but, rather crotchety, and I honestly believe this was the merest fancy."

Ward shook his head.

"If Mr. White is the man I know as George Gresham I have little doubt the woman he calls his sister is the person who officiated as a kind of nurse-companion to his wife. Mr. Beresford, you can't believe how I hated that woman. She was polite, almost servile, to me; but I loathed her. If your millionaire is indeed George Gresham why, then, Mrs. Austin is as certainly Jane, and probably Mr. Ainslie's Sister of Mercy."

"Should you know her again? Had she a crooked little finger?"

"There was something peculiar about it. I believe I should recognise her voice."

"But I can't make out his object," said Paul, slowly, "Mrs. Carew (I can't call her anything else) enjoyed the Captain's property for life; by killing her he made himself a poor man."

"The property may have been so tied up that he could not touch it. He may have insured her life heavily, and the large sum of money been preferable to him than the use of his wife's income."

"I wonder how he dared to come near her child," cried Mr. Milton. "You'd have thought he would have picked out any other victim in the world rather than the daughter of the woman he had murdered!"

"No other victim would have answered his purpose," said Marcus Ward, slowly. "I gathered from Mrs. Gresham she meant to leave her child to her sister's care. I know she had almost a morbid terror of Gresham even seeing her."

"How did he account to you for it?"

"He said his wife was apathetic by nature, and did not care for the noise and trouble of a child. I asked her once if it would not be a diversion to her to see her little girl. I have never forgotten her answer—'Oh, no; it would not be safe.



Ivy must never come here.' Long ago I guessed her own fortune was probably settled on the child, to revert to Mr. Gresham in the event of her death."

Paul started.

"Your theory explains all. That must be it. From the first White showed an extraordinary interest in Miss Carew's health, and was always marvelling whether she would marry young. I happen to know he persuaded Sir John to insist on our wedding not being hastened."

"Then it's plain enough. If she dies unmarried and a minor all her wealth passes to him."

"Great Heaven!"

Paul did not speak irreverently, but he was tried almost beyond his strength; the veins on his forehead stood out like thick purple cords, his eyes had a wild, hunted look.

"She is in his power," he gasped. "How are we to save her? Oh! remember while we are deliberating she may be done to death as cruelly as was her poor young mother."

Marcus Ward looked steadily into the fire; then he spoke his thought.

"No," he said. "White is a cautious man; he will do nothing hastily."

"He did before."

"He was a younger man then; besides, he was not fighting against such odds. He had chosen an obscure, unknown doctor; the poor victim's own friends were at a distance. If I had accused him of poisoning his wife he could have procured witnesses to prove his devotion to her, and as his wife she could not have given evidence against him. The case is widely different now."

"It is far worse."

Mark shook his head.

"It is perilous, I grant you, but far from hopeless. Find me Mr. White's address, and I promise you to save Miss Carew."

"You will tell him your suspicions?"

The doctor smiled.

"I might have done so fifteen years ago; I am wiser now."

"But what shall you do?"

"I shall be cautious. I fear both he and Mrs. Austin would recognise me in my own character; but judiciously disguised I believe I could introduce myself as an old friend of the Fortescues, who, finding them from home, and having but a short time to spend in this country, wished to make the acquaintance of their adopted daughter. It will go hard if I do not manage to see Miss Carew alone."

"And then?"

"I shall find out what doctor attends her, go to him in my own character, and tell him to order a nurse."

Paul seemed to hang upon the doctor's words.

"But the nurse might be tampered with."

"Not the one I should send. Sir," and he pointed to Mr. Milton with a smile, "this is a case of need. Don't you think Molly would spare us Tibbie?"

Mr. Milton laughed.

"Thereby hangs a tale, Mr. Beresford. Tibbie is the pillar of Mrs. Ward's nursery. I once asked my daughter what she considered her greatest luxury, and she answered promptly, 'Tibbie.' Mark often acts with lavish generosity to his patients, but Molly and he are of one mind in most things. Carriage, horses, cook, everything the house possesses have been at some time or other pressed into the service of Mark's pet patients, and Molly looks on with cheerful resignation, only she usually makes the sacrifice with one condition, 'Take what you like, but spare me Tibbie.'"

"And who is Tibbie?"

Dr. Ward grew grave.

"She was cook in Mr. Gresham's house fifteen years ago. She it was who fetched me to her mistress's death-bed; and she, and she alone, shared my doubts. She was leaving service to marry a greengrocer, but I remember she insisted on giving me her address in case I ever had another patient whose end was like Mrs. Gresham's. She was a simple, uneducated woman, but with a lot of common-sense, and she felt that our united efforts would surely save another victim, though our suspicions had not been awakened in time to save Mrs. Gresham."

"When I came home from the East I received a call from a comely, respectable widow. She had seen the plate on my door, and recognized my name at once. The greengrocer had gone the way of all flesh, and she wanted me to recommend her to some situation of trust."

"At that time my wife was dangerously ill, and my children—I had two then—perforce given over to servants. I was well-nigh worn out with trying to nurse my wife, keep house, be father and mother both to the bairns, and not let my profession be neglected."

"I had been up six nights when Mrs. Tibbet appeared on the scene. I did not know very much of her, but I felt she was to be trusted, and I engaged her on the spot. I have never rejoiced more over any step. She nursed Molly back to health, reigned judiciously in the nursery, and kept the servants in perfect awe."

"In two months' time my wife was well, and I believe the good soul thought she ought to offer to leave us, but neither Molly nor I would hear of it, and she has been with us ever since, till, as Mr. Milton tells you, 'Tibbie' is one of the pillars of the house. I never quite know what capacity she fills; she is by turns nurse, lady's maid, cook, housekeeper, and parlourmaid, but she is always and at all times a valued, humble friend."

"And for this paragon you are going to rob my daughter," said Mr. Milton, gravely. "I hope you don't expect me to forgive you."

"I think she will," retorted Paul. "Mrs. Ward looks too kind and gentle to refuse to help anyone in trouble."

"You are forgetting one thing," interrupted the doctor—it was noticeable how both he and his father-in-law persisted in talking cheerfully, almost jestingly, just to keep up poor Beresford's spirits. "In a far-famed receipt for roast hare these words occur:—'First catch your hare.' In our schemes for rescuing Miss Carew, surely we should head our programme with 'First find her.'"

"And that is impossible!"

"Not the least in the world. Mr. Beresford, I begin to think you are a pessimist! You seem to delight in looking at the blackest side of things!"

"I never did till now," returned Paul; "but I confess I feel hopeless. How can we cope with such an arch-fiend as White, alias Gresham?"

"Easily. Our strength lies in numbers. Mr. Gresham dares not have many confederates; I doubt if anyone but Jane is in his confidence. Now there are three of us. Then you must remember Miss Carew herself is on our side. Half-an-hour's conversation with her, and we should come off victors."

"But how are we to find her?"

"You must tackle White on Monday."

"And till then! Think of the danger of the delay."

"Don't be afraid," urged Ward, kindly; "the man is an arrant coward, and he won't dare to precipitate matters unless he is

forced to by fear of detection. Doubtless now he has hidden Miss Carew from all her friends, and forged a story of your guilt, which he can tell her at any moment if she rebels at being parted from you. Why, he thinks the game is in his own hands, and he will proceed very slowly and warily."

"But—"

"Mrs. Gresham died of digitalis—at least, my suspicions of it amount to well-nigh certainty. After his success with one poison the villain is far more likely to keep to the same weapon than risk detection by attempting to use a fresh one, of whose effect he has had no experience. Then digitalis is, of all poisons, the one whose presence it is most difficult to detect, the symptoms being a nervous languor and loss of appetite, a gradual increase of weakness and prostration. All these might be mistaken for the gradual progress of consumption. In other patients the effects are great depression, constant headache, giddiness, and weak and rapid pulse. All these could well be ascribed to an attack of low fever."

"Then you really think there is no danger?"

"I won't say that," returned Mark, who was a very honest man. "What I maintain is there is no immediate danger. Mr. Gresham has first to get his step-daughter into a state of weakness, which will engender no remark if she is treated somewhat as an invalid, and has medicine and occasional nourishment not partaken of by the rest of the family."

"He has done that," broke in Paul.

"And that state of weakness must continue long enough for the general impression to be received by spectators that she is really ill. A doctor must be called in, and allowed to try various remedies without success. This is the plan he pursued with her mother. I had been attending her two months before it struck me there was anything peculiar in her case. Depend upon it (though I would gladly find Miss Carew to-morrow and rescue her from her peril) if you discover George Gresham's address three weeks hence you will be in ample time to save her."

Paul rose to go. It was past midnight, and he was conscious he had trespassed unconsciously on his entertainers. He tried to apologize, but Ward cut him short.

"Anything I can do you are most welcome to—I need no thanks. If act or deed of mine can save Ivy Carew I shall be most grateful; it will be as though I had done my best to atone for the inexperience which fifteen years ago suffered her mother to perish under my eyes."

Paul wrung his hand. Mr. Milton noticed a locket on his watch-chain.

"My dear fellow," he began, "you know we may all be making a great mistake. I feel sure you have a likeness of Miss Carew. Don't you think if you showed it to my son-in-law it would set the matter at rest? He would know at once if the portrait bore any resemblance to Mrs. Gresham."

Paul opened the locket and placed Ivy's picture in Marcus Ward's hand. It was a perfect gem, having been taken by a first-rate photographer, and then coloured by hand. The doctor looked at it long and earnestly, then he closed the locket almost reverently, and gave it back to its owner.

"Mrs. Gresham might have sat for it," was his comment, "except that she had blue eyes, and instead of a happy smile her expression was that of quiet despair."

"Beresford," interposed Mr. Milton, "you mustn't go moping yourself to death;

you'll want all your strength and courage before we've finished this affair, so don't go trying loneliness and starvation."

"Dine with us on Sunday," said Mark, kindly, "if you don't mind one o'clock and three small children. I will introduce you to the celebrated Tibbie, and see whether my wife's stony heart has been softened into promising to lend her to you."

The next day was simply interminable to Paul Beresford, and possessed but two incidents worthy of record.

By the morning's post he received a letter from Mr. Cleghorn, demanding his immediate return to the office. Paul wrote back courteously, saying he had had the pleasure of seeing Mr. Milton the day before, and the chief had granted him a month's leave of absence. His letter finished, he enclosed Mr. Cleghorn's epistle and a copy of his answer to Harley-street, briefly endorsing the former with these lines:

"I am convinced this letter is White's work, though, if he really left London at one o'clock, I can't imagine how he heard of my return to it."

The second incident was even more peculiar. John Dudley called at the chambers in Cecil-street, Strand, and requested to see Mr. Beresford.

The young man looked hopelessly uncomfortable when he was ushered into our hero's presence. He played with his hat; he looked anywhere but at Paul, and seemed thoroughly impressed with an equal desire to get his errand over, and a fear to disclose it.

"Sit down," said Beresford, kindly. Although the boy was in his enemy's service, he could not be angry with such a hopeless specimen of humanity.

"I want to tell you something," began John, awkwardly. "I don't know if it's wrong, but he never said I wasn't to."

"It can't be wrong, then, to tell me," was the quiet reply. "What is it?"

"Mr. White never went down by the one o'clock train yesterday."

Mr. Cleghorn's letter ceased to puzzle Paul; he understood it perfectly.

"You said he did."

"And I believed it," said John, firmly. "I never told a lie in my life, Mr. Beresford. The master went off in a cab in a fearful hurry, and I heard him tell the man to drive for his life. Well, you hadn't been gone ten minutes yesterday when back he came. I declare you might have knocked me down with a feather. I thought at first it was his ghost; then I fancied he had seen you come in, and was going to make a fuss about it, but he never said a word of the sort. He just told me he had missed the train, and I was to send off a telegram to Mrs. Austin at once, and then get him a dinner quietly at the office."

"I never was so taken aback," said John, after waiting to see whether Mr. Beresford wished to ask him any questions. "Generally the master's the man to say a thing and stick to it, and I know there was time to catch the train if the man had gone at a decent pace. Well, he ate his dinner and drank his wine as naturally as possible, and then sent me for a cab and went off again."

"And why did you come here?"

"Because I didn't want you to think I deceived you yesterday. I don't mind telling you, you can't see Mr. White if he orders me to, and I don't see that I can help refusing his address if he says no one's to have it, but I don't mean to tell lies for him. When I said he'd gone by the one o'clock train I believed it, Mr. Beresford."

"I am sure you did."

"And I stand by my promise, sir. If you come early on Monday morning you shall see him; I'll manage it somehow."

It was a great relief to Paul when Sunday came and he could present himself in Harley-street. His gloomy anticipations of ill were dispelled at the first sound of Mrs. Ward's voice. He felt she was in her husband's confidence, even before she said quietly,—

"Papa and Mark have both told me of your troubles, Mr. Beresford, and I am sorry for you; but you must keep up your courage. Papa never fails in anything he undertakes; so you must trust the shadow of his success will hover over you too."

"As a proof of my infallibility, Mr. Beresford," said the old man merrily, "the invaluable Tibbie is to be lent you. The comely widow is quite prepared to pack up at a moment's notice and start for unknown regions."

"You shall see her presently," said Mary Ward. "I assure you you will have a devoted assistant. Tibbie was very fond of poor Mrs. Gresham."

It was a pleasant family gathering. Paul found himself as much at home as though the Wards had been friends of long standing. Molly and the children retired after dessert, but the three men gathered round the fire, and Paul told the story of John Dudley's visit.

"Of course he saw you as he was hurrying to the station, and stayed in town that he might get a hint of your movements. I don't suspect the boy, but I fancy White is not a man to stick at much, I shouldn't wonder if he followed you about all that afternoon."

"If I had only seen him."

"He was probably disguised."

"Well, to-morrow will soon be here."

"And you have decided on a course of action."

"To be sure. I mean to ask him where he has taken my darling."

"You don't understand my question. Are you going to him as friend or foe?"

"As foe, decidedly."

"Then you will fail."

"What do you advise?"

"Ignore all ill-feeling on his part; be friendly and civil, shake hands effusively, and say how sorry you are to have missed the letter containing his seaside address, which must have got to Scotland just after you left."

"But why should I be such a consummate hypocrite?"

"Simply you force him to speak."

"But I couldn't shake hands with him."

"You had better. Soap and water will wash off the indignity."

"I would rather tell him what I think of him."

"And redouble your Ivy's peril?"

Paul groaned.

"But he must know I don't feel friendly to him."

"Not in the least! If you adopt the course I advise you, thrust all the onus of explanation on to him. If you go your own rash way he will probably say he does not care to be insulted in his own office, and calmly turn you out, declining to hold any further communication with you."

"Dr. Ward; you are a wonderful man; you seem to know everything."

Mark laughed.

"I have bought my experience pretty dear; but seriously, Beresford, you will be very foolish if you quarrel openly with this man."

"I suppose you are right, but to shake hands with the wretch who is trying to kill my darling!"

"You don't know he is trying?"

"You said so."

"No. I own such is my fear, but I don't think I stated it as a fact. Mr. Beresford, I wish you were a more cautious man. I am afraid you will ruin all by a little lack of care."

"But how can I help it?"

"I don't know. Have you no intimate friend you could take with you to-morrow, who knows all your circumstances?"

Paul shook his head.

"I don't think I have an intimate friend in the world. And Sir John was so anxious for our engagement to be kept a secret that no one knows of it."

"Does Mr. Ainslie know of it?"

"Yes."

"Then we have the very person. I will just look at Bradshaw."

He rang for the guide, studied it attentively, and then pushed it from him with a sigh.

"If we had only thought of it last night! We might telegraph—but even he could not be here in time."

"He would have been the very man."

"Yes. You need not have breathed a word of your fears about Miss Carew's safety; you could have taken Mr. Ainslie to the office just as a natural thing, and if you had asked in his presence for Miss Carew's address it would have been a very awkward task to refuse it."

"But it is too late."

"I fear so."

"Then I must go alone."

"I'd go in a moment," said John Milton, warmly; "but I own I share your infirmity. I have not Mark's caution, and if I suspect a man of being a villain I have a habit of telling him so."

Paul glanced at the doctor. Mark understood the unspoken entreaty.

"I would go with you in a moment, but that it is more than probable I should be recognised as the doctor he hoodwinked long ago. That would be a fatal step, and I could not effect a suitable disguise in time to be of any use."

"Of course he will refuse to let me see her. I am quite prepared for that, but I must say I marvel what reasons he will allege."

"The bogus cablegram."

"Well by this time to-morrow I shall know all. I wish I felt hopeful."

"Oh, nonsense!" returned John Milton. "You're just a little down, that's all. I think myself it would be an excellent plan to telegraph for that parson fellow. As it is, he could not get here in time for the appointment, but he might be of great use later on."

"I will send the telegram the moment I have seen White."

"Provided you do see him."

Paul was not without a little doubt on that subject himself. He felt John Dudley's will was good to serve him, but he rather questioned his power; still this eager fear did not prevent his being at his goal very punctually at half-past nine.

John Dudley was there before him.

"I'm going into the master's den to tidy up," said the clerk quietly; "he will be here in a few minutes, and as he must pass through that door you can't fail to see him, Mr. Beresford."

Perhaps no time had ever seemed so long to Paul in his whole life as those "few minutes." He was opposite a clock, and could therefore tell exactly how long he waited, and though he could have declared it was hours, the minute-hand had made but one quarter of its journey round the dial when the click of the door was heard, and Paul stood face to face with George White, alias Gresham, for to be frank with you, Dr. Ward's conjecture was quite



right, and the man whom the world worshipped nowadays as a millionaire was the self same person who had sought out the struggling young doctor fifteen years before, and driven him to Clapham to see his wife.

Their eyes met. Paul strove hard not to let the loathing and aversion he felt shine forth in his; one glance told him Mr. White was not in the least surprised at his visit. The next puzzled him; he had expected to see anger, confusion, and fear; he was met with an urbane smile and outstretched hand.

"Hal Beresford! back again from the north? I should say you were not sorry. Scotland must be uncommonly cold in such weather as we have had lately."

Marcus Ward's warning rang in Paul's ears; he made a desperate effort to control his feelings, and succeeded. He spoke as composedly as possible.

"I was very glad to get back to London. A man in my position naturally would be; but a great disappointment awaited me when I found Ivy was not in Coningsby-street, and the man in charge there actually told me he had not your address."

"No, he has not got it. You see all people who really know me can come here, and I don't want a host of strangers to invade my little seaside sanctuary."

"But Dudley must have been under some mistake; he actually said you had left orders I was not to know where you taken Miss Carew."

"I was obliged to."

"But why?"

"My dear fellow, Miss Carew is a minor, and under my sister's care; her guardians cabled to me that you had a wife already living, and they wished her kept carefully from your society."

"Mr White, you could not have believed such a cruel slander?"

"I never believed it for a moment; they said Mrs. Beresford had been to see them, and gave me her address. I went across to a man who has lots of dealings with the Colonies, and borrowed a directory of New South Wales; sure enough the name, Mona Beresford, was entered under the address given."

"But she is not my wife."

"Granted; I for one could never doubt your word; but Ivy has taken the matter up warmly. As an heiress it seems she has always been haunted by the dread of being married for her money, and she jumped to the conclusion you had proposed to her for her fortune. We had a terrible scene, and finally she insisted on being taken away from Coningsby-street."

"And where is she?"

"My good fellow, you place me very awkwardly. Sir John orders me to stop all communication between you and Miss Carew. The young lady herself declares she will not see you. How can I do anything but obey their joint wishes, and keep my temporary ward away from London?"

Paul felt the man was lying to him; but, oh! how difficult it was to detect him, and bring his guilt home. The story was so plausible, so complete in all its details.

"I suppose Mrs. Austin is with Ivy?"

"Oh, yes!"

"Then, Mr. White, if you will give me their address I will pledge my word to call at the house but once, and should Ivy refuse to receive me I will return at once to town. You surely cannot refuse me now!"

The millionaire looked thoughtful.

"Certainly that alters the case; but you are imposing hard conditions on yourself, and I tell you frankly I believe Miss Carew will refuse to see you. She is not well; she has lost both tone and spirits lately; in

fact, she has taken this matter very seriously to heart."

"Only give me her address! I promise should she refuse to see me I will not molest her with further visits, but return at once to London."

He loved Ivy so well, trusted her so completely, that he felt it was impossible she would refuse to see him, and at least listen to his defence.

"I consent," said George White, at length; "but I must add yet one more condition."

"And that is?"

"That my sister knows of your coming, so that she may prepare Ivy for the shock. Mr. Beresford, I cannot waive this point. Miss Carew is not strong, and has been ordered to avoid all excitement."

"May I see the telegram you send?"

"You shall write it yourself. Come into my den."

He gave Paul a chair, and from a drawer took a telegram form, which he handed to Beresford.

Paul's suspicions were totally disarmed. He might have been alarmed at any telegram sent by Mr. White; but since he was allowed to word it himself he decided there could be no sinister design in it. And this was the message:—

"Paul Beresford, Strand, to Mrs. Austin.—Shall be with you this evening. Please prepare Ivy for seeing me. I can explain all."

Mr. White put the message in an envelope. Paul began to fancy he had wronged him, for he never glanced at its contents before he rang for John Dudley.

"Take this across the road, and send it off to Mrs. Austin."

Then as the boy left the room,—

"There is no train till one o'clock, Mr. Beresford—perhaps you would like to catch that?"

It was then much over eleven; the discussion had taken over an hour.

"I should," said Paul, promptly, "if you will give me the address."

"I hope you don't think I am going to cheat you out of it? Here it is," and he handed Paul a card, perhaps left at the office to assist Dudley's memory—"Myrtle Cottage, Hollington, Hastings."

Paul seemed to walk on air as he left Mr. White's office. The interview had gone better than he had dared to hope for. He dashed off a hasty note to inform Dr. Ward of his success, partook of a modest lunch, and reached Charing Cross in ample time for the one o'clock train.

Disappointment awaited him. That special train ran on "Saturdays only." In reply to Paul's remonstrances the booking-office clerk showed him a foot note in the timetable drawing the attention of would-be passengers to the fact, and then added, by way of consolation, that another train, a slow one, started in two hours.

So it was fully six o'clock when our hero reached Hastings, and well on towards seven when his fly stopped at Myrtle Cottage. It was a pretty little white house, with garden in front, and just the kind of place to please anyone not in very strong health.

Paul rang at the bell, and inquired for Mrs. Austin.

The neat handmaiden started.

Did the gentleman not know Mrs. Austin and Miss Carew left by the midday train; She thought for London?

Paul's heart seemed to stand still, his very lips grew white.

"Do you know if they had a telegram before they left?"

"Yes, sir. It was that telegram made them resolve to go. I was in the back drawing-room, and the door stood ajar, so I

couldn't help hearing the telegram was for Mrs. Austin; but I can't help thinking it was about the young lady too, for I heard her say, 'Take me away! take me away!'"

"And they would have remained here but for the telegram?"

"Why, yes, sir. They had taken the rooms for a month, and hadn't been here a week. Mrs. Austin acted quite the lady; she paid missis the full rent for the whole time, and gave me half-a-sovereign."

Paul gave her another.

"I wish you could tell me where they have gone?"

"To London, sir. All the luggage was labelled for Charing Cross. They had very few boxes for such ladies. But then, they were just the nicest people. Mrs. Austin so free and liberal, and Miss Carew just as sweet and gentle as though she knew she hadn't long to live."

Paul's heart ached.

"Not long to live!"

"Well, sir, of course. I'd not say so to her face, but that was what everyone thought who couldn't look at Miss Carew without feeling she was fading away."

Pleasant news this for the man who held her dearer far than his own life. Paul had come down to Hastings feeling the victory was won, and Ivy as good as saved. He went back to London with the conviction that somehow or other George White had played him false, and that day's work would but increase his darling's peril.

## CHAPTER XI.

THE time of a girl's engagement is said to be the happiest of her life. I have heard this statement made over and over again, and yet I venture to dissent from it, and to affirm that, save in exceptional cases, it is far from being a period of perfect bliss.

In a long engagement lasting years, entered into with all possible hope and trust, with love on both sides, as the time wears on it is almost impossible that the girl should not know some of the pangs of hope deferred, should not feel sometimes dragged two ways between the conflicting claims of family and *fiancée*—the family jealous of her superior love for a stranger, the *fiancée* unable to see her relations with his eyes.

There must in such a case be many a pang for the girl herself, especially if as time goes on her lover is not able to fix the day. How such a girl would dread the visits of distant relations with their would-be kind inquiry of "anything settled yet?"

How she would shrink from the weddings of friends and schoolfellows where some well-meaning busybody would be sure to ask, "And when will it be *your* turn, my dear?"

No; decidedly and emphatically! If an engagement lasts for years it cannot be an entirely happy period; and, on the other hand, a short betrothal has its trials.

To be continually hunted away to try on this or that, to have to spend one's days in a whirl of shopping, excitement and visits, leaves little time for that intimate knowledge of each other, which is the mainspring of happiness.

It had seemed to Ivy Carew that hers was an exceptionally bright destiny. She loved Paul with all her strength and fervour of her heart; but it was such bias to realise she had found her hero, and that he loved her back again, that she was in no haste to change the name of *fiancée* for that of wife, and no plan could have been more welcome to her than the spending a few months in London, seeing her lover often, and learn-

ing to know him better before she gave herself for all time to his keeping.

Sir John's Australian project was the first blow to her day dream. She dreaded the idea of living with strangers, and a nameless sense of ill oppressed her; but when she had actually taken up her abode in Coningsby-street the extreme kindness of host and hostess did much to reassure her, and Ivy would have been quite happy but for Paul's sudden summons to Edinburgh, which deprived her of all chance of his society.

It was a real sorrow to her, specially that she had not bidden him farewell; besides, Ivy had been brought up in a wealthy home. She knew that so soon as they were married Paul Beresford would never need to enter the Society's office again, and it seemed to her hard that, for her sake, he should not have refused to undertake the journey to Edinburgh.

"My dear girl," said Mrs. Austin, when the young heiress half hinted at this, "he could not help himself. While he remains at the 'Security' he must obey the orders of his superiors."

Ivy flushed up. The phrase was an unhappy one, and jarred upon her.

"Come," said the widow, kindly; "really you have no reason to fret; just think how soon you will have the monopoly of his society entirely. Really, Ivy, you should rouse yourself. It is not wise to let any man see you can't do without him."

Ivy's pride came to the rescue. She went about as usual, and tried to believe a few days would bring Paul back to her; but as the days grew into weeks, and there was no word of his return, she became sad and troubled.

Mr. Cleghorn came to dine in Coningsby-street by special invitation. He was introduced to Miss Carew, but not informed of her engagement to his employé; so (unless the millionaire had given him a private hint) he had no idea how interested Ivy was when he turned the conversation on his branch office at Edinburgh.

"Young Beresford will do well there," said the great man, suavely. "It seems a little hard on him to be exiled so suddenly, and I said as much last time I wrote; but he answered he was perfectly contented, found Edinburgh society enchanting, and had not the least desire to come south."

It was a deliberate lie, uttered at the request of his host; but how was poor Ivy to guess that? Disparagement of her lover from Mrs. Austin or George White she might have doubted; but when a stranger gave his testimony unsolicited what could she do but believe?

She wrote a piteous little letter to him a few days before Christmas, begging him at least to spend the festival with her. Mrs. Austin obligingly undertook to post that note, and it never left Coningsby-street.

Ivy marvelled Paul never mentioned her appeal when he wrote to say how impossible it would be for him to leave Edinburgh. Hurt and wounded in her tenderest feelings, Ivy Carew answered him briefly, sadly.

From that time there was no pleasure in their correspondence. Her letters became brief chronicles of facts; of her love for him, of their reunion, she said nothing. And then quite suddenly her health began to fail; it was so gradual, that Ivy could not have told when she began to feel ill only, when January was halfway through, she began to realize there was something amiss. Her limbs shook under her, she was white and thin, her appetite had deserted her, and she felt a strange dislike for any exertion.

Mrs. Austin declared she was fretting, taxed her with it to her face; Ivy indignantly denied the charge, and then proved

its truth by bursting into a flood of passionate tears.

"My dear child!" said the widow, "this will never do! I shall not be able to look Sir John and Lady Fortescue in the face if I have to give you up such a poor little white ghost as you look now. Why, they would think we had been starving you."

"You have been all kindness."

Mrs. Austin hesitated.

"You know I have been young myself once, and I understand what is troubling you. You fancy Mr. Beresford is neglecting you, and you are fretting about it."

"I do want to see him so badly!" and the tears glistened in her eyes.

"Write and tell him so."

"I couldn't."

"My dear child there would be no harm in it; he is your own property now, and you have a right to him."

"I couldn't ask him to come if he does not care care to."

"Then I shall ask him myself."

"Mrs. Austin!"

"Don't be afraid. I won't put a word that can compromise your dignity. You need not appear to know that I have written, and I won't send the letter if you disapprove of it."

But when Ivy read the note she liked it very much. It said just enough, and not too much: "Ivy had not been well; she seemed to miss her uncle and aunt a good deal. Could not Beresford desert luxuries for a few days, and come down south to brighten her up?"

"He is sure to come after that," decided Mrs. Austin, as she directed the note.

"And when do you think?"

"He would come the end of the week, because it would give him Sunday here. This is Tuesday; I think you may fairly expect him on Friday."

"And you think he will come?"

"My dear girl, he must come. If he's any regard for you, he can't stay away while you are ill."

"And he has a regard for you."

"He quite worships you, that's my opinion. And though his conduct may have seemed a trifle strange lately, I shall never believe but what he's a model of constancy."

Ivy's eyes filled. How her lover's apathy was trying her no words could say. Poor young couple! they were helpless, and at the mercy of as cruel a fiend as ever walked in human form.

Every one of Paul's letters were opened cleverly by means of steam, and perused in the privacy of Mrs. Austin's dressing-room; and only about one in three ever passed beyond that dressing-room; the widow taking good care that the warmer and more impassioned letters went into the fire, while the shorter ones in which lurked a shade of coldness for what the writer deemed his love's neglect, were carefully refastened and sent to Miss Carew's room.

Ivy looked almost her own self when Mrs. Austin's note to Paul had been sent to the post (it never reached it, but how was she to know that, poor child). There was a sparkle in her eyes, and a bright colour on her cheeks. She looked more like the Ivy who had been the sunshine of Lady Fortescue's life than the pale, listless girl whom all Coningsby-street had decided was very ill.

But, alas! for human expectations. The very morning after Mrs. Austin had written her letter, as Ivy was getting her head into a state of confusion over Bradshaw, and trying to decide how soon she might expect her lover, a telegram was brought in for her hostess. Mrs. Austin read it in perfect silence, then she cast a pitying glance on Ivy.

"My poor child!"

"Oh; what is it? Don't keep me in suspense, dear Mrs. Austin. Do tell me what has happened?"

"Can you bear it?"

"I can bear anything but suspense."

The widow placed the telegram in her hands; it was from Paul Beresford, and had been handed in at the Edinburgh office that morning:—

"Quite impossible; get I—to use a little common sense, and see how unreasonable it is to expect me to desert my employers' interest for a mere caprice."

Ivy stretched out her hand—it had grown so thin lately that Paul's ring would hardly stay on her finger—and threw the telegram into the fire.

"Don't speak to me," she implored, as Mrs. Austin began some attempt at consolation. "I will go to my own room if you don't mind, I can't bear to talk now. I want to think it all out."

Many another girl would have written and broken off her engagement. Ivy waited. For one thing she had not been supposed to know of Mrs. Austin's request, so she could hardly punish Paul for refusing it. She determined to wait until she saw him, only from that day her confidence in him, her hopes of happiness, fled. Little wonder her letters grew few and sad; little wonder she made no allusions to their future meeting; her very heart seemed breaking with its misery, and yet the girl's nature was so innately noble that she could not bring herself to reproach her lover.

"When I see him will be time enough," she decided. "I think when he sees the change in me he will be sorry, and I will set him free at once."

Mrs. White and his sister held many consultations together in those days, and Ivy little guessed her share in them.

"Nothing could have succeeded better," said the widow. "I declare George, if you fail it will be entirely your own fault."

He wiped the beads of perspiration off his forehead.

"I shall be glad when it is all over. I don't like the business, Jenny."

"You did not like the business fifteen years ago, but I don't think the memory of it has troubled you much since."

He shuddered.

"That's all you know."

"Of course if you prefer poverty, if you would like to go back to the old days of scheming and plotting again—a bare existence—I have nothing to say."

"No," and his voice was more determined, showing the momentary vacillation was over. "I can't do that it's no use regretting things now, for it is too late to go back."

"Then you had better push on."

It was February when this conversation took place, only a day or two before Paul Beresford escaped from his Scottish exile.

"Plenty of time."

Mrs. Austin shook her head.

"The Fortescues have been a fortnight in Australia already."

"Their business might take months."

"It might. On the contrary, a few days might end it. I shall not feel safe after the first of April."

"Nonsense."

"That would give them three weeks in Sydney. Sir John is not the man to care to stay long, and his wife will pine to get back to Ivy, so that you have only two months you can rely on, George."

"Lallington suspects nothing."

"Nothing in the world; for blindness commend me to a fashionable physician."

"Or a neophyte."

She shook her head.



"No. That man from Pimlico was no fool. He had his suspicions, but we were too quick for him."

"Poor devil! he was half-starved."

"I wonder what became of him!"

"Died years ago most likely. He went to the East, and no doubt caught some of the diseases rife there."

"Well, it's no use thinking of him; what we have to remember is not the past, but the future. You had better show Ivy that cablegram."

"She won't believe it."

"A month ago she would have laughed it to scorn; I think she will be more reasonable now. My surveillance of the correspondence has had admirable results."

The next scene of the vile plot may be imagined. Ivy's guardian went to her with the bogus cablegram in his hand. He explained to her that Mr. Beresford's wife was alive and in Australia; she had presented herself to Sir John, and the Baronet sent a peremptory order that his niece was to hold no further intercourse with her quondam lover.

The way Ivy received the news astonished him. She made no angry denial, no eager protestations. She seemed to be reviewing something in her mind; then she clasped her white hands together, and murmured, tremulously,—

"Thank Heaven!"

"My dear girl," said George White, seriously alarmed, and beginning to think she had lost her senses, "what do you mean?"

"This explains everything."

"It explains that Beresford is a villain. I really don't see what else it explains."

"He is not a villain!" said Ivy, faintly.

"Don't you see the truth? It is as clear as possible."

He shook his head, and so she went on,—

"I would stake my life on Paul Beresford's honour. I am positive that unless he loved me he would never have asked me to be his wife. His eagerness then, and his coldness now, were a contrast I could not understand. Now I know the truth."

"It is more than I do."

She smiled half sadly.

"I always felt there was a secret in his past. He never said so; but again and again his words implied it. Of course, that secret was his marriage."

"And his intention to commit bigamy," interposed George White.

"Hush! I believe he thought his wife dead; I believe the last time he came here he was still under the mistake. Since then some strange chance has revealed to him she is alive. He shrank from telling me, so he tried what coldness and neglect would do to estrange my affection. He stayed away from me, he left my letters unanswered, and all to save me from the truth. He preferred I should deem him false, careless, a fortune-hunter even, to giving me the shock of knowing the true barrier between us."

"You are a most extraordinary girl."

"Perhaps. I am thankful to see this," and she touched the cablegram. "Now, at least, I can understand his conduct; now, at least, I may go on honouring him in my heart as a king amongst men."

"My dear Ivy," and even George White's voice had a ring of pity in it, "you are too romantic for this prosaic workaday world."

"Perhaps."

"And you would actually see this living 'king among men,' and assure him how intensely you approve his conduct?"

The sarcasm was quite lost upon Ivy Carew.

"No," she said, slowly; "I will never willingly see him again, it would be too

painful for us both; but I will write to him, and assure him I, for one, shall never judge him harshly."

Very soon after that the Coningsby-street establishment was broken up, and Mrs. Austin took her beautiful young charge to Hollington; but even in the few days she was at Myrtle Cottage Ivy grew rapidly worse, and the pretty handmaid had told Paul Beresford the simple truth when she said that only to look at Miss Carew you knew she was "fading away."

Paul suspected Mr. White of playing him false, but it so happened that in this particular instance no deceit had been employed. Believing implicitly in the existence of her lover's wife; feeling he sought the interview only to assure her of what she already believed (his own faith in Mrs. Beresford's death when he proposed for Sir John's niece), Ivy was as anxious to hide herself from Paul as Mrs. Austin could possibly be to hide her.

"I can't refuse Beresford the address if he demands it," George White had said in a kind, fatherly way to Ivy the Sunday before. "Wouldn't it be better for you to see him once, and have done with it?"

She shook her head.

"I couldn't; it would kill me!"

"Then I'll send you a telegram if he's coming, and you and my sister had better leave Hollington. Don't tell me where you go to for a few days; that will be the best plan."

So Mrs. Austin had not the slightest difficulty in persuading Ivy to leave Myrtle Cottage; instead, the girl was feverishly anxious to be off, and as they had very little luggage the maid completed the packing briskly, and Ivy had plenty of time, after a dainty lunch, to drive to Hastings and catch the one-thirty train from London.

There were very few passengers. As a rule, the people who leave the seaside on a Monday are of the class who like to travel very early or very late, to get home in ample time to see after their domestic matters, or to enjoy their short stay by the sad sea to the utmost limit; therefore the one-thirty train was seldom much patronised on Mondays, and this, particular afternoon there were not half-a-dozen people waiting for it besides Mrs. Austin and her charge.

The widow and Ivy travelled first-class, of course; the maid and the stray parcels were in a second-class carriage close by. Ivy leant back in a corner, half-hoping someone would come in and put a stop to Mrs. Austin's attempts at conversation, which she found most trying, when, just as the train was moving, the door was thrown open, and a young man was almost bundled in by the guard.

He looked about twenty, or less, had a fresh, pleasant face, a complexion rather too delicate for health, while with his heavy greatcoat, silk muffler, and generally taken-care-of appearance, gave the impression he was sojourning at Hastings for his health.

It was in part true; Ronald Thorne came from a consumptive family. His childhood had been spent in the East, and there was quite sufficient delicacy about him to make his guardians very careful where he spent his winters. A public school education had been out of the question, but perhaps that had not been altogether a disadvantage, for frequent travels, much mixing in English and foreign society, and the careful training of a very intelligent tutor, had combined to give the young man a delightful lack of self-consciousness, good powers of conversation, an immense amount of *savoir faire*, while, on the other hand, he had nothing of effeminacy or conceit about him. He was now spending six months at Hastings—one of half-a-dozen pupils received by an experienced coach. Very soon he was to go to

Oxford, where he would probably take as good a place as though he had been brought up on the usual plans.

He looked delighted at catching the train; and yet, if it had only been known, he had been at the station more than an hour, and so had not the slightest excuse for missing it. He felt like a person on the brink of an adventure, and so far from being a clandestine one, it was undertaken at the express request of his guardian. Mr. Roland Thorne had the utmost right to be in good spirits.

Sad and tired as she was, Ivy could not help noticing the brightness of his face, and for the first time it struck her as a little hard that women should have come to the full burden of life's sorrows at an age when their brothers are mere boys. This stranger was probably her senior, and yet he was as much a boy as an urchin of twelve, while she had a heart well-nigh broken.

Mr. Thorne watched her furtively; saw that her smelling-bottle had the monogram I. C. engraved on its silver top, and noticed that she addressed her companion as Mrs. Austin.

"It's all right," muttered this precious youth to himself. "I've done the business as neatly as possible. I shall deserve a pretty medal and a vote of thanks, that I shall," and then he turned up his coat-collar, pulled his hat over his eyes, curled himself up, and appeared to sleep.

"Ivy," said Mrs. Austin, in a low tone, when they had passed Red Hill and were rapidly approaching town, "where shall we go?"

Ivy started.

"I don't mind."

"My dear you must have some choice. I should drive at once to an hotel, but that Mr. Beresford would easily trace us through the cabman."

"He won't try."

"I think he will."

"Send Mary and the boxes to an hotel, then we can walk about and lose ourselves."

"But, my dear, we must sleep somewhere!"

"Yes. Well then, leave Mary and the luggage at Coningsby-street, and when we have settled on something she can come and find us."

"But it will be dark before six, child."

"We shall be in town by four. Surely we can find something in two hours?"

Mr. Thorne dozed on.

"How that boy sleeps!" said Mrs. Austin. "I wonder if he is ill?"

"Oh, no, just tired!" said Ivy, quietly.

"See, here we are at Charing-cross; just speak to Mary, and come away."

Mr. Thorne rubbed his eyes, and alighted. He watched Mrs. Austin give some directions to a pretty maid, and then saw her and Ivy get into a cab, and tell the man to drive to the Crystal Palace Bazaar.

Mrs. Austin and her young friend partook of tea and cakes at that pleasant resort, and never noticed their late travelling companion going in extensively for ham-sandwiches and coffee at another table.

Nor did they perceive that when they walked slowly away from the Oxford-street exit the tall boy in his thick great-coat and muffler followed them at a discreet distance.

"No end of fun," said Mr. Thorne, to himself; "but the idea of a fellow being set to do such a thing by his guardian. And she's awfully pretty, too. I wonder what it all means?"

Mr. Thorne was a good walker; but he did not have to put his powers much to the test, since after a very short distance Mrs. Austin took a cab.

Of course Master Ronald took another, and strangely enough both vehicles stopped

before the Grosvenor Hotel, and both Ronald and Austin engaged rooms there.

But with a difference. The lady retained three bedrooms and a private sitting-room, giving her orders with the air of one accustomed to command, and requesting that a messenger should at once be sent to the Charing-cross Station for her maid and her luggage, and another to summon Dr. Lullington early the next day.

As for Ronald he quietly told the waiter he wanted a bed for the night, and should most likely be leaving the next day. Then he ordered a snug little dinner, and sat down to thoroughly enjoy it.

"He told me to ask old Foxy for five pounds, and to spare no expense," reflected the young gentleman; "and I fancy I've carried out his injunctions to the letter. My didn't old Foxy stare! I believe he thought I'd forged the telegram. Well, I shall just keep my ears open, and I'll go round to Harley-street to-morrow morning. No need to trouble them to-night; besides, I should like to go to the play."

And he did go to the play, and enjoyed himself very much, and the first news which greeted him in the morning (only he had to make discreet inquiries to obtain it) was that Miss Carew had been taken dangerously ill, and Dr. Lullington was then with her.

Ronald hurried to Harley-street after this, put aside the astute man-servant, who declared his master was engaged, and walked straight into Marcus Ward's presence.

"I knew patients didn't come so early," he said, promptly; "besides, I was sure you'd want to see me, so I wouldn't let that Thomas gammon me. My! what's the matter?"

For he had suddenly perceived his guardian was not alone; but that a gentleman sat opposite, who seemed to have despair and misery stamped on every line of his face.

(To be continued next week.)

(This story commenced in No. 1974. Back Nos. can be obtained through any newsagent.)

### FOR THE OLD LOVES.

Come, old love, down the grassy lane,  
Where nodding hedgerows wear again  
Their wreaths of summer snow.  
Oh, just as sweet, and just as white  
The wild clematis blooms to-night,  
As twenty years ago!

Do you remember how we went,  
Our hearts too full for mere content,  
Along this rustic way?  
Oh, just as full, and just as sweet,  
But calmer, closer, more complete  
Our happiness to-day.

I saw you, full of lover's pride  
Wear the white garland of a bride,  
When life was merged in life.  
But sweeter far than orange flowers,  
I gathered in new-wedded hours  
Clematis for my wife.

My little wife of twenty years,  
How short the chequered way appears;  
We travelled side by side.  
Cling closer, old love, closer yet,  
I thank my God that He hath set  
Our feet in ways so wide.

I thank my God that He hath given  
The sweetest blessing under Heaven  
To me—your faithful love.  
Though time brings cares to you and me,  
We are together, sweet, and see,  
Clematis waves above!

It has another name, you know,  
The Travellers' Joy. . . and as we go  
To that mysterious sea  
O'er which we sail to fuller life,  
In shade or shine my little wife  
Is Travellers' Joy to me.

### FACETIÆ

WINKS: "See that fellow on a bicycle—  
all doubled up like a jack-knife?" Jinks:  
"Yes; he's on pleasure bent."

SUE: "Do you remember? It was in this  
garden that we first met!" He: "Yes  
yes! But that can't be helped now!"

SHE: "Of course, every woman likes to  
be flattered." He (with meaning look):  
"But there are women whom it is im-  
possible to flatter."

HOT WATER CURE.—"Yes," said the hash-  
ed philosopher: "I'm taking the hot water  
cure." The landlady noticed that he looked  
thoughtfully at the soup.

THE DOCTOR'S VISITS EXPLAINED.—Mrs.  
Hingso: "There's that doctor calling on  
the widow. Is she ill?" Mrs. Jingo:  
"No; but she is rich and pretty."

"How do you like my picture?" "Oh,  
it's very sweet, only I do think those sheep  
are a wee bit too much like cows—that is,  
unless—er—er—they are cows, of course."

PASSENGER: "My goodness! Half a  
second more and you would have slammed  
that gate right into my finger." Guard:  
"Well, it's raining, an' it 'ud soon wash  
off."

"I WONDER why they call the hotel bell-  
boy 'Buttons'?" said the inquisitive  
traveller. "Probably," replied the bachelor,  
"it's because he's off when you need him  
most."

THEY were looking through the library.  
"If you had the divine gift what would you  
rather write?" asked the romantic young  
woman. "Cheques," replied the sordid  
young man.

"WHAT do you call these?" he asked at  
the breakfast table. "Flannel cakes," re-  
plied the wife of his bosom. "Flannel?"  
They made a mistake and sold you cor-  
duroy this time.

MRS. VON BLUMER (petulantly): "Can't  
you sit with me between the acts?" Von  
Blumer: "Well, I suppose I could; but I  
like to have a few moments to myself during  
the performance."

COUNTRY COUSIN: "I don't mind the city  
so much now. I am getting accustomed to  
its ways." "Are you? How?" "Well,  
I used to turn two somersaults every time  
I got off an omnibus, and now I only turn  
one."

BARBER: "Why is it that you and your  
brother are so bald?" Victim: "I'll tell  
you if you'll promise not to say anything  
more about it." Barber: "Sure." Victim  
(whispering): "It's because our hair has  
fallen out."

FIRST BURGLAR—"You was mighty lucky  
to get cleared; but that there lawyer  
charged ye about all ye stole, didn't he?"  
Second Burglar: "That don't matter. I'll  
watch my chance when he goes home  
to-night, and get it back."

HOPELESS CASE.—HOAX: "My wife is  
never happy unless she's in trouble." Joax:  
"Can't you cure her?" Hoax: "Not  
much. When she hasn't anything else to  
worry her, she'll get out a railroad time-  
table and study that."

NO RIVAL.—Mr. Blinks: "Who has been  
here." Mrs. Blinks: "No one." Mr.  
Blinks: "Hush! Who's been smoking those  
olgars you gave me last Christmas?" Mrs.  
Blinks: "No one my dear. The lamp was  
turned up too high, that's all."

He: "And so you refuse me?" She: "I  
do." He: "Then, proud beauty, know the  
truth. I am the inventor of a successful  
dish-washing machine. Only one will ever  
be made, and the woman who marries me  
will have it. Ah, ha! Farewell!"

"WHERE is Jossair?" asked Mrs. Corn-  
tassel, uneasily. "Well," answered her  
husband, as he proceeded to fill his pipe,  
"I won't say for certain. If the ice is as  
strong as he thinks it is, he's gone skatin';  
and if it ain't he's gone swimmin'."

TOWNE: "He's quite a linguist, I be-  
lieve." Brown: "Yes, he can converse in  
fourteen different tongues." Towne: "So  
I understand; but there's one tongue he  
has never succeeded in mastering." Brown:  
"What's that? Chinese?" Towne: "No,  
his wife's."

BESSIE (to Atkinson, who is struggling  
with a punctured tyre, and expressing his  
annoyance rather emphatically): "Have  
patience, Mr. Atkinson. I'm not at all in  
hurry to get home. Atkinson (irritably):  
"Patience be hanged! Why, I've got the  
blessed thing by the hour."

FROM AN AUTHOR'S NOTE BOOK.—The fol-  
lowing is an extract from the diary of an  
impeccable author: "Rose at five and  
had a sonnet and a glass of cold water for  
breakfast. I retired early in the evening  
without supper, as I feared the neighbours  
would be annoyed by the rattling of the  
knives and forks."

AUNT HETTY: "What in creation is the use  
of these new-fangled forks and spoons?"  
City Niece (a follower of fads): "Don't you  
think it's rather nice to have things which  
no one else uses? Forks and spoons go  
into people's mouths, you know." Aunt  
Hetty: "Yes; but, sakes alive, they all go  
into the same dishwater."

FIRST BURGLAR: "How ye gittin' on?"  
Second Burglar: "Bully! Doin' firs' rate.  
Robbin' doctors now. I jus' ring th' bell  
late at night, an' tell 'em Mrs. Astorbil  
is fallin' in a faint, an' they mus' run fer  
her life." "Then do ye knock 'em down  
w'en they come out?" "Bah! You're  
way behind the times. Quick as a plic-  
man sees a man runnin' at night, he arrests  
'im as a suspicious character. I wait till  
they grab the doctor, an' then I go in an'  
rob th' house."

CAREFUL MARKETING.—Lady: "Is this  
celery fresh?" Dealer: "Yes'm." "Quite  
fresh?" "Yes'm." "Just in?" "Yes'm."  
"Is it crisp?" "Yes'm." "Are you sure  
it is all right?" "Yes'm." "Where did  
you get it?" "From a market gardener,  
mum." "To-day?" "Yes'm." "This  
morning?" "Yes'm." "How much is it?"  
"Threepence a bunch." "Isn't that rather  
high?" "Not at this season." "I've got  
it here lately for less." "That was small,  
and rather green." "Can you send it up?"  
"Yes'm." "In time for dinner?" "Oh,  
yes'm." "Just break off a piece and let me  
try it." "Yes'm. Here is some." "Humph!  
It isn't nice at all. It's withered." "Well,  
mum, it's a good while since you asked if it  
was fresh."

DURING a recent case a lawyer of the  
bullying type was examining the prosecutor,  
who charged the defendant with assault  
and battery. Lawyer: "Where did the  
defendant strike you?" Witness: "He  
struck me on the bridge." Lawyer  
(sharply interrupting): "How's that? You  
said a while ago that he struck you on the  
balcony." Witness: "So he did, sir. I'm  
telling you no lie." Lawyer: "Did he  
strike you more than once?" Witness:  
"Only once, sir, and I was satisfied with  
that." Lawyer: "How, then, could he  
strike you on the bridge and on the balcony  
at the same time, and with one blow?"  
Witness: "He did it, anyhow, sir." Magis-  
trate (interrupting): "On what balcony?"  
Witness: "The balcony of the hotel, your  
worship." Magistrate: "But on what  
bridge?" Witness: "The bridge of my  
nose, sir. Had the gentleman waited, I'd  
ha' told him myself."



## Gleanings from Many Sources.

In a day one workman can cut by hand 6,000 watch-glasses.

CONSUMPTIVES are much benefited by the use of camel's milk as a beverage.

OVER one-third of the manufactured goods made in France are the products of female labor.

IN the United States and Canada there are 990,094 Odd Fellows and 837,395 Freemasons.

A LETTER carrier employed for forty-two years has during that time walked over 75,000 miles.

BENGAL is noted for the number of its young widows. It has 48,644 widows who are under ten years of age.

It is believed that electric power, generated at Niagara Falls, will be supplied to Toronto on and after January 1, 1903.

THE punishment of a bigamist in Hungary is peculiar, and keeps the culprit constantly in trouble. He is compelled to live in the house with both of his wives.

THE scarcity of elephants in India may be inferred from the fact that in 1895 an elephant could be bought there for £55 to £60, now the price has advanced to £1,000.

SOME of the laundries in Paris use balloons to dry their garments. A bamboo frame is attached to a captive balloon, and the clothes are securely fixed to them. The balloon makes six ascents a day to a height of 101 feet or more.

A NOVEL Parisian toy is a little whistle which emits a whine that passes into a juvenile shriek and winds up with the plaintive exclamation of "Mamma! Mamma!" Already the streets of Berlin are resonant with the walls of these droll toys.

THE roar of a lion can be heard farther than the sound of any other living creature. Next comes the cry of a hyena, and then of the owl—after these, the panther and the jackal. The donkey can be heard fifty times farther than the horse, and the cat ten times as far as the dog.

SNOW sells in the north of Sicily for about one halfpenny a pound. It is a government monopoly, and the Prince of Palermo derives the greater part of his income from it. The snow is gathered on the mountains in felt-covered baskets and is sold in the cities for refrigerating purposes.

IN THESE days of cheap literature, when the masterpieces of English writers can be had for 4d., it is interesting to note that 1,000 years ago the Countess of Anjou gave 200 sheep, one load of wheat, one load of rye, and one load of millet for a volume of sermons written by a German monk.

A STARTLING effect is produced by some playful bicyclists, who fit a piece of brown paper in the lens of a wheel, and in it cut apertures to represent mouth, nose and eyes. It is an adoption of the old rustic trick of scraping out a turnip pumpkin, with a lighted candle inside, to depict a ghostly visage.

THE coining of the small silver pieces known as Maundy Money for 1901 were distributed on Maundy Thursday which fell on April 4 this year, and the coins bear her late Majesty's head. Being the last issue of Queen's Maundy Money a great demand for the limited supply coined at the Mint is sure to take place, even greater than there will be for the first issue of Edward VII.'s next year.

ALL United States pennies are minted in Philadelphia. The alloy of which they are made consists of 95 per cent. copper, 2 per cent. tin, and 3 per cent. zinc. It takes about one hundred and forty-eight of them to weigh one pound, and the Government makes 4s. 6d. on every pound minted.

THE stylographic pen was, it appears, first invented by a Frenchman of Paris, in or before 1657 or 1658, for it is described in the M.S. "travels" of two Dutchmen recently found at The Hague, and published by M. P. Faugère. It was another Frenchman, Joseph Arnauld, who invented the steel pen before J. Alexander.

MEXICO has a national bathing day. It comes once a year—on the 14th of June. On that day every Mexican, from the President down to the humblest servant or laborer, is expected to give himself or herself a good wash. Some of the Mexicans, probably fearing the pneumonia, rarely permit water to touch their bodies; but on the national bathing day the most of them like to get in the swim.

ONE of the new century's greatest additions to human progress is believed to be an invention by a young electrician named Hutchison, a native of Alabama, whereby deaf mutes can hear and speak. His system of the intensification of sound waves by electrical conductors acting on the sensitive tympanum has been tried on 4,000 deaf mutes, and not once failed. Experts declare that the discovery is of immense importance.

THE Bon Marche, the great department store of Paris, feeds its 4,000 employees. The smallest kettle in its kitchen has a capacity of 100 quarts, and the largest 500. Each of the fifty frying pans is big enough for 300 outlets. Every dish for baking potatoes holds 225 pounds. When omelets are on the bill of fare, 7,800 eggs are used at once. For cooking alone sixty cooks and 100 assistants are usually at the ranges.

ACCORDING to the historian, Albertus Agnensis, who flourished about the beginning of the twelfth century, the sugar cane was sucked with avidity by the crusaders, although refined sugar was not introduced to England until about six hundred years ago. Then it came in conical loaves, of the style familiar at the present day. According to an entry in the books of the Lord Chamberlain of Scotland, in 1329, loaves of sugar were retailed at the rate of a standard ounce of silver per pound. Admiral Sir John Hawkins, in the reign of Elizabeth, first brought sugar from the West Indies. The earliest refineries were erected in London in 1544.

THE carrier pigeon manifests knowledge of the imprudence of excessive indulgence in food after a prolonged fast. It is stated that this bird, when travelling, rarely pauses to find food. If the distance be long, it flies on, seldom stopping to take nutriment, and at last arrives at its destination, thin and utterly exhausted. If corn be presented to it it refuses to eat, contenting itself with drinking a little water, and then sleeping. Two or three hours later it begins to eat with great moderation, and sleeps again immediately afterward. If its flight has been over a long distance, the pigeon will proceed like this for forty-eight hours before resuming its normal mode of feeding.

UP to the year 1823 the bodies of suicides in England were not permitted to rest in consecrated ground, and were denied the rites of Christian burial. From this restriction arose the custom of burying suicides and murderers at cross-roads. Those who were excluded from holy rites were pliously buried at the foot of the cross erected on the public road, as the place next in sanctity to

consecrated ground. It was an old superstition that the devil amused himself at night by dancing at cross-roads, hence the erection of a cross at intersecting roads, to prevent Satan from engaging in such improper practices. From this superstition also arose the custom of driving a stake, in the shape of a cross, through the body of the suicide or murderer, to prevent his infernal majesty from running off with the corpse.

THE Budget is, as a political term, no older than the middle of the eighteenth century. Like many other political terms, it was first used as a nickname, and it was not till about 1780 that it crept into official use. A budget was in ancient days a leather purse or wallet. The term was first used to describe the financial statement of the affairs of the country in 1733 in a pamphlet called the "Budget Opened." Therein Sir Robert Walpole, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, was compared to a quack displaying his wares to a gaping populace. "And how is this to be done?" runs the pamphlet. "Why, by an alteration only of the present method of collecting the public revenue. So then out it comes at last; the Budget is opened and our State Empire hath dispensed his packets by his Zany Couriers through all parts of the kingdom. I do not pretend to understand this art of political legerdemain."

"THE MAN WITH THE IRON MASK" was a real character. He was imprisoned at the island of Sainte Marguerite, and subsequently at the Bastille, at which prison he died November 19, 1703. He was a prisoner for about thirty-five years. Some historians have denied the existence of such a person, but late investigations have proven it without question. The prisoner's face was covered with a black velvet mask, fastened with steel springs, which he was forbidden to remove on pain of instant death. Various theories have been advanced regarding his identity, among them the most plausible being the one which makes him a twin brother of Louis XIV., thus disposed of to avoid a disputed succession to the Crown of France. Other theories make him the English Duke of Monmouth, the reputed son of Charles II. and Lucy Walters, Henry, son of Oliver Cromwell; and Fouquet, the rival of Louis XIV. for the affections of Mlle. de la Valliere. Voltaire was the first to investigate and publish the story of the mysterious prisoner.

MEN of marvellous memories have existed since the beginning of the world, and many of them have used the Bible to exhibit their gift of extraordinary recollection. An old beggar at Stirling, Scotland, known over sixty years ago as Blind Allick, knew the whole of the Bible by heart; and if any sentence of it was read to him he could name book, chapter and verse; or, if the book, chapter and verse were named, he could give the exact words. A man tested him by repeating a verse and purposely making one verbal inaccuracy. Allick hesitated, named the place where the passage was to be found, and at the same time pointed out the verbal error. The same man asked him to repeat the ninth verse of the seventh chapter of the Book of Numbers. Allick almost instantly replied: "There is no such verse; that chapter has only eighty-nine verses." A monk who resided in Moscow in the fifteenth century could repeat the whole of the New Testament; Daniel McCartney was a complete concordance of the New Testament, and of most of the Old Testament. Lord Cartaret knew all the New Testament by heart, from the first chapter of Matthew to the last chapter of the Apocalypse, and could recite it verse by verse as readily as if he had the book actually before him.

## SOCIETY

APRIL 23rd was the golden wedding day of the Grand Duke of Luxembourg, who was born nearly two years before Queen Victoria, and is the oldest of Sovereigns.

THE King, who had originally intended to spend Easter at Copenhagen, has postponed his visit to Denmark until the end of August, when His Majesty will be the guest of King Christian for a week at the Chateau of Fredensborg after his stay at Homburg.

ARRORS of the civic honour awaiting the King's eldest daughter in Glasgow, it may be recalled that His Majesty received the Freedom of the Second City on October 8, 1868, when he laid the foundation-stone of the University Buildings on Gilmore Hill. The visit and event are commemorated by the name "Prince of Wales's Bridge" given to the bridge which spans the upper portion of the Kelvin in the Kelvingrove Park.

It was a curious circumstance that when the late Queen visited Ireland last year, and for the only time in her life became a resident in the Irish metropolis, the Lord Mayor of Dublin should, also probably for the only time, have been an Englishman who had come over to Ireland and settled there in business. Sir Thomas Pile appears to have given great satisfaction during his mayoralty, and played a very difficult part with remarkable tact, for he is about to receive from the hands of an influential committee a testimonial for his services.

VARIOUS surmises have been made as to the value of the Imperial opal which arrived in London recently. Mr. Lyons, the owner, modestly wishes the stone to be presented to the Crown in the name of the Australian Commonwealth. A leading firm of jewellers has offered £20,000 in hard cash for it, while other firms are offering deposits with a view to selling it at sums up to £100,000 or forfeiting the deposits. Mr. Lyons, however, has not the least intention of selling the jewel.

QUEEN Victoria's admiration for Sir Walter Scott's works is well known, and one of the rooms at Balmoral is hung with pictures of scenes from his novels. The Queen's literature was always a heavy item in her luggage when she travelled, and every day parcels of Blue Books, statistics, and maps, as ordered by the Queen's own command, used to pour in. Her Majesty had two readers, who were at one time the governesses of Princess Henry of Battenberg, and their duties were very light.

SKIBO CASTLE has been undergoing great alterations. When Mr. Andrew Carnegie wants anything done it has to be of a thorough-going order, and about £70,000 has been spent. The decorators are still in the stately building, but the heaviest part of the work is done. The great castle is now completely changed from what it was eighteen months ago. The public apartments are all new, and special attention was paid to the providing a spacious library. The hall is of noble dimensions, and has a white Sicilian marble staircase. From the lofty turrets of the castle magnificent views of sea and land are had. Skibo itself stands high, and is seen far and wide. Mr. Carnegie's favourite residence is five miles from Dornoch, Sutherlandshire, which is five miles from a railway station.

THE celebrated and far-travelled "Duchess of Devonshire" has become the property of the well-known American Millionaire, Mr. Pierpont Morgan, who acquired it the other day for the sum of £25,000. Though the negotiations will not be finally concluded until the return of Sir Thomas Agnew, who at present is travelling in Turkey, the sale may be looked upon as practically effected. It is satisfactory to learn that the portrait itself—the face, the

hands, and even the hat—has passed through its strange adventures absolutely unscathed, and that the picture is, to all intents and purposes, as perfect as it ever was. Mr. Pierpont Morgan is making a reputation as a collector of art treasures, and when anything unique is in the market no financial considerations stand in his way. It was only a few weeks ago that he gave an enormous sum for a well-known Turner.

THERE is a rumour that after all the *Ophir* will not call at the Cape, because of the plague, and will not indeed visit South Africa at all. If that be so the suggestion that the vessel should return by way of the Suez Canal lacks originality. Canada is only too anxious to entertain the Royal party from Vancouver to Halifax, and if the South African trip is given up there is no reason why its desire should not be achieved. After leaving Australia and New Zealand the *Ophir* might very well call at Hong Kong and Yokohama (where a visit to the Emperor of Japan would be diplomatically very desirable just at present), and then cross the Pacific to Vancouver. Of course the *Ophir* would not be able to get to Halifax in time to carry the Duke and Duchess across the Atlantic, but, after all, a week in a cruiser would not be a very great hardship for them to bear.

THE BARONESS BOURMONT-COUTTS who entered upon her eighty-eighth year on April 21st, remains a striking example of the truism that persecution does not kill; for immediately after she came into the Coutts's fortune, upon the death of that Duchess of St. Albans whom the world knew as Miss Harriet Mellon, the actress, and subsequently widow of "old" Tom Coutts the banker, she was made the victim of a persecution which was too cruel for tears. One Richard Dunn, a member of the Irish Bar, was seized, or fancied that he was seized, with a passion. Dunn went on persecuting Miss Angela Coutts, as she then was, for years, till at length, after more than one term of imprisonment, he was laid by the heels for having sworn in a Bankruptcy Affidavit that Miss Coutts owed him a hundred thousand pounds. He was sentenced to eighteen months' imprisonment, and had to find sureties for good behaviour. The case is interesting, moreover, from the fact that the present Lord Brampton, then Mr. Henry Hawkins, was counsel for the prosecution, and it was his first appearance in one of a long series of *causes célèbres* in which he figured either as advocate or as judge.

THERE is a special reason for the German Emperor's having given the various members of the Duke of Abercorn's mission to Berlin souvenirs of their visit in the shape of valuable presents instead of the usual decorations, which are intrinsically as worthless as so many pieces of gilded tin. His Majesty knows that it is contrary to the rule of our Court for British subjects to accept foreign Orders without the special permission of their Sovereign, which is only given in very exceptional cases—a rule which had its origin in the policy of Queen Elizabeth, who once declared that she reserved it to herself to "brand her own sheep." The rule is not so rigorously applied to the case of foreign war medals, but in the matter of civil Orders it has been carefully observed—the more so because, as Bismarck once pungently remarked, a decoration in most cases is not so much a reward of past merit as of services to come. Many British subjects accept and wear foreign decorations without the sanction of their Sovereign, but it is not correct to do so, and the recipients would not venture to wear them at our own Court.

## STATISTICS

THE total quantity of fish landed during 1900 was 14,557,760 cwt.; the value being £20,660,297. This large quantity had been caught with a decreased percentage in the loss of life at sea.

THE sun's heat has been utilised in California to generate steam. A huge reflector, measuring 30ft. 6in. across at its top part, and 15ft. below, has been erected, and the sun's rays are brought to a focus on a boiler measuring 13ft. long, and containing 100 gallons of water. The reflector is moved by clockwork so as to receive the sun's ray. In the boiler steam is maintained at a pressure of 150lb., and through its agency a motor of fifteen horse power is kept working. By an ingenious arrangement the condensed steam is returned to the boiler. The engine pumps water from a well. An idea of the amount of heat produced by the reflector is afforded by the statement that it will melt copper, and set wood on fire at once.

## GEMS

WE prepare ourselves for sudden deeds by the reiterated choice of good or evil that gradually determines character.

EVERY now and then a man's mind is stretched by a new idea of sensation, and never shrinks back to its former dimensions.

THE truest help we can render an afflicted man is not to take his burden from him, but to call out his best strength, that he may be able to bear the burden.

YOU might as well expect one wave of the sea to be precisely the same as the next wave of the sea as to expect that there would be no change of circumstances.

THE most satisfying thing in life is love and sympathy; but these, like fame, must come spontaneously and indirectly, if they come at all, and not be sought as a specific end or direct aim in themselves.

## FASHION NOTES

WITH tulle gowns there will be worn during the spring and summer blouses of the finest of white fabrics, soft, full puffs showing about the wrists, or from the elbow down, and ending in a band of black velvet.

SOME of the pretty new muslins are printed in all-over designs with medallion effects, while other cotton fabrics show both cashmere designs and colours. As for the new batistes, they are prettier than ever, especially the embroidered varieties.

THE postillion tab or back is a fashionable adjunct to many of the new Eton jackets and round waists. It may be a single tab or double, though always short; it may be cut in one with the back of the garment, or again, it is attached to a lower edge and the joining concealed by a folded sash or belt.

THE bolero jacket is extremely popular, and is really growing in favour. At present, for instance, on dinner gowns, on house gowns and on street gowns these smart little boleros are seen. They are made of velvet, cat work, embroidery, lace, of the same material as the skirt and of entirely different fabrics.

GLACE kid cotton gloves are the choicest ones for church, with two or four buttons, and of white or of a light tan. If tan a heavier kid is used, and one or two buttons are sufficient—in fact, a regular heavy walking glove is the smartest. Many women always cling to a suede glove of the mousquetaire style with two buttons only. These are of a lighter shade of colour than the gown or of black. Of course, this does not refer to a red or a green or a blue gown—simply to the brown or a gray. A white suede glove is absolutely inappropriate, however.



## Helpful Talks with Our Readers

BY THE EDITOR.

The Editor is pleased to hear from his readers at any time.

All letters must give the name and address of the writers, not for publication, but as a guarantee of good faith.

**MAY JACKSON.**—There is no hope for you as a writer of short stories. I am sorry, but I cannot in decency say you are a genius.

**CHURCHILL.**—Wash the hair about once a month with the following shampoo:—Powdered borax, one teaspoonful; spirits of hartshorn, two teaspoonfuls; soft hot water, one quart. Mix all together, and rub well into the hair and into the skin of the head, rinse with clear water, and dry with hot towels. Brush the hair well night and morning; this will induce a healthy action of the skin, and thus arrest the greasiness.

### HOW MANY.

What schemes of empire every day are planned,

Never to be;

What golden ships are every hour manned,  
And lost at sea.

What brilliant hopes do every minute rise  
Majestical,

To longed-for goals of fair and sunny skies,  
From which they fall.

What bright new dreams are dreamed away  
In peace

That lasts not long,

What fond desires yearning for release,  
Are breathed in song.

What songs are sung that vanish with the  
day,

In darkest night,

What daring spirits forever pass away,  
In bitter fight.

W. S. H.

**INSOMNIA.**—A simple remedy for sleeplessness is to wet a towel with warm water and apply it to the back of the neck, pressing it hard against the base of the brain, and fastening over this a dry cloth to prevent too rapid evaporation. The effect will be found prompt and pleasant, cooling the brain and inducing sweet and peaceful slumber. This remedy will prove useful to people suffering from overwork, excitement or anxiety.

**W. MURPHY.**—The consumption of coal in the furnaces of the big ocean steamers is enormous. The *Oceanic* daily consumes 480 tons, her highest daily run being 524 knots; the *Deutschland*, 570 tons, highest daily run, 584 knots; the *Kaiser Wilhelm Der Grosse*, 500 tons, with 590 knots highest daily run; the *Lucania*, 475 tons, with 562 knots highest daily run, and the *American liner, St. Paul*, 300 tons, with 540 knots highest daily run.

**A LONELY WOMAN.**—You have acted—forgive me for saying it—like a fool, and now you are crying like one. You have nagged at your husband by day, and given him certain lectures by night, and now you are wondering why he doesn't love his home. It is of small use to cry over spilt milk, but change your way of things. Pride is at the bottom of the disagreement, and they are tears of pride and jealousy that you are weeping. And these are the tears that make both eyes and heart smart.

**PHOEBE.**—Selfishness is written in every line and over every page of your letter, and I can neither help nor advise you. You think far too much of yourself, my friend, and the only thing that will correct you is experience, which, undoubtedly you will get, for humans are the old world's foot-balls. You have many a miserable hour in front of you; many scalding tears and bitter disappointments. When these come bear them with all the pluck and discernment you can. Take your medicine, and, while I hope it will do you good, I can only say, after reading your selfish, almost brutal letter, that you will find it very, very nasty.

**ZIRIELA.**—You are as much to blame as the gentleman who has proved so fickle. According to your own explanation, you began the flirtation, and in a few weeks discovered that you really admired the man whose acquaintance you formed in a rather irregular manner not at all sanctioned by society. His desertion of you, just after you had begun to love him, was reprehensible; but perhaps he imagined you too forward, too free in your manifestation of affection. It is useless for you to seriously deplore his rude treatment. Take my word for it, you will survive his loss, and your anguished heart will soon recover its natural buoyancy.

**LONG TOM.**—You are jealous, Master Tom, that's what's the matter with you; and according to your story you deserve to feel the pangs of the Green Monster. You have no more right to the girl's regard than the other chap. You have never proposed to her; you haven't apparently the pluck to do so; and because she happened to be kind and pleasant to you, and appeared to care for you, you have built up a superstructure of fancied masculine mastery and proprietorship. It will serve you right if the other man is a little more courageous and wins her. I've not the smallest atom of patience with cowards who dawdle around, and never pop the fatal question.

**A CITY CLERK.**—I certainly believe in freedom, and I like neither the tyranny of capital nor the tyranny of labour. In the case you name it is evident that the possession of a little money and the stimulation of a little accidental success have made the man into an overbearing bully. He thinks everybody is to bow to him. Of course, if you begin to draw the line and determine within yourself that up to a certain point he shall come, but no further, you will have to risk the loss of your situation. If you do this, when it comes to the sticking point, let him have it straight from the left shoulder. Naturally you will not use the physical force argument, but just tell him as calmly and forcibly as you can what you think of him. The telling of the truth, especially to rich men, is sometimes a duty.

**MINERVA.**—You ask if it is etiquette to allow a gentleman to look over your book in church. It is certainly bad manners to stand next to a gentleman in church and without a book, whether he be young or old, and not to offer to share your book with him. If you are a regular worshipper at a particular church, and a stranger comes in to your pew, such courtesy as you may show him in this way goes far towards destroying the frigid atmosphere said to be prevalent in many churches. Many a man is often encouraged to attend a place of worship regularly from the small attention shown him in this way. Of course, your good sense will prevent your acting in any but a formal yet kindly manner, for the possible consequences of such courtesy is apparently what you are afraid of. No one but a cad would presume on such kindness.

**HEARTBROKEN.**—Your case is indeed exceedingly distressing, and I sympathize with you. It would certainly be a sin, and one for which you would be severely punished, should you marry the man to whom you are engaged, and whom your guardian insists you shall marry, when your heart does not incline you to the act. Bring all your moral courage to your rescue. Appeal to the gentleman, and state the case plainly. Say that when you consented to the engagement you intended to fulfil it, but your heart now forbids you to marry him, and no earthly power can force you to take upon yourself false vows before God's altar. In these days no girl need be forced into a reluctant marriage if she possesses a spark of moral courage, and a soul capable of doing battle for her own happiness.

### THE SOUL OF CHILDHOOD.

Then, like a newly singing bird,

The child's soul in her bosom stirred,

I know not what she sang,

Because the soft wind caught her hair,

Because the golden moon was fair,

Because her heart was young.

I would her sweet soul ever may

Look thus from those glad eyes and gray,

Unfearing, undefiled.

I love her; when her face I see,

Her simple presence wakes in me

The imperishable child.

F. W. H. M.

**WELSHMAN.**—If you purpose being married in, say, Manchester or Liverpool, or, indeed, anywhere in England, you must adopt the following course: One or both of you must reside in the parish in which the wedding is to take place for at least three weeks before the date of the ceremony. Again, you can be married by special license, ordinary license, or a registrar. The first costs a considerable sum of money, probably about £50; the second from £2 10s. to £7, much depending upon the amount of fees, &c. Marriage by registrar costs only a few shillings. Two witnesses are necessary, and they generally sign the register; above all things, do not forget the three weeks' residence. The little book advertised in these columns "Marriage, Weddings, and the Home," would prove most useful to you. Meantime I wish you and your bride-elect every happiness.

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**SYMPATHY.**—Undoubtedly it is the duty of a husband to spare his wife all unnecessary pain; but were he certain that his trouble would pass away in a few days it would give her less cause for anxiety than if he only informed her of the difficulties that were not likely to be soon overcome. Why should he deprive her of the comfort of sharing his expectancy of hope, and only confide in her when his troubles were too great for him to bear. Still, many a man reasons that it is right to keep his embarrassments from his wife, and such a course is justifiable when her womanly solicitude for his welfare causes her to fret over the least cloud that obscures their happiness; but what is more soothing than a wife's cheering words of hope? When there is mutual confidence over their troubles there is mutual comfort in preparing to meet the impending difficulty. A woman's judgment is clear and far-seeing, and her counsel or penetration often give her husband a better view of his own circumstances; it is only when a man, too weak to face his own chances, harasses his wife with needless fears of never-to-be-realised contingencies that the reticence is to be preferred, which clouds the husband's brow and renders him moody and sullen at home, while his children cower from his look, and his wife, conscious that all is not well, awaits, in patient foreboding, the falling of the misfortune that has already thrown its shadow on their hearth.

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#### POLITENESS.

Politeness is not exactly a virtue, but an imitation and assumption of certain virtues. It induces us to appear kind, self-denying, indulgent and modest, because it would be unenviable and rude to appear otherwise. We are polite for our own sakes quite as much as for other people's. Politeness is the art of disguising our feeling and passions rather than of repressing them; it is a sense of propriety rather than of justice; it does not make a man better, but it renders him infinitely more sociable. Politeness, not content with avoiding everything that can possibly displease, continually and actively strives to please. It modifies the demeanor as well as the conduct, and adds a charm to the most trifling actions. When simply and naturally practiced, and without any affectation, it almost amounts to friendship and affection.

#### PREJUDICES.

All men and women are guided by their prejudices. They could not be safe without their guidance, they could not even live in the world of active life unless they were at every moment and at every point protected by prejudices which warn them against things that are dangerous and disagreeable, and invite them to those that are useful and pleasant. The majority of all these prejudices are protective. But there comes a time when, by common consent, reason should take the place of prejudice. After wisely avoiding things that might be injurious, but which there was no time to examine, it is well to test the prejudices that have been handed down from father to son and from mother to daughter, and especially those stronger impressions made by the father upon his daughters and the mother upon her sons. It is a mark of education and a sign of culture to revise one's prejudices, to strengthen those that are rational, and to lay aside those that have lost their meaning and are no longer useful.

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